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THE

PREFACE.

For the literal and other errors occurring in this work, the Editor presumes he may confidently rest his justification in the assurance, that it has been committed to the press with more than common anxiety, and from thence presented to the public, with more than ordinary exertion and toil.

To enter into a detail of the circumstances in which the subject matter of these volumes has originated, would

be idle and superfluous: they have, directly or indirectly, transpired throughout this kingdom, and throughout every portion of the globe, where the name of Britain has ever been heard;—but unfortunately for the illustrious Persons connected with this history, those circumstances have been so imperfectly understood, so treacherously exaggerated, so basely with-held, or so disingenuously communicated, that the lively, sensible, and enthusiastic minds of the British people, have hitherto been left wholly to conjecture; and conjecture has, from appearances, misrepresentation, and a superficial view of disguised facts, conjured up a scene so atrocious, monstrous, and iniquitous, that censure and reprobation have been heaped upon the innocent, while

sentiments of pity and commiseration, have, to this day, been entertained for those, who alone merit public indignation and disgrace.

The Editor of "The Spirit of 'The Book,' or Memoirs of Caroline Princess of Hasburgh," fondly indulges the hope, that a fair, candid, and impartial perusal of these volumes will be accorded him: and that, until the work has been sifted to its last page, no harsh or unjust interpretation, no unwarrantable anticipation, nor ungracious prejudice, will bias the minds of those who honour his pages with their leisure:—he entreats them to bear in remembrance that it is as unwise as it is illiberal to draw premature conclu-

sions on the nature and tendency of this Work, merely because it professes to embrace the matter of the abominable and slanderous volume known by the name of "The Delicate Investigation." He deprecates, as every honest Englishman must, that unnatural, guilty, and malignant volume!—he contemns, in common with the rest of his countrymen, the ungenerous sentiment that could actuate to the publication of so gross a libel, and the mercenary principle that could compromise for its suppression.

The subsequent Letters are compiled from the purest motives—from a patriotic feeling,—and with all the affectionate devotion of a subject;—to establish the innocence of the per-

secuted,—to do justice to the injured, —and to substantiate the virtues of, and to wipe off the calumnious stain from, those illustrious Personages, which public error and misconception have attached to them.

The British are a just and a generous people, but they are often too hasty in their conclusions: their resentment frequently precedes their judgment, their censure is sometimes premature, and their praise unqualified. The Editor, however, dares now to hope, that the following pages will clearly and satisfactorily elucidate those important facts which have hitherto been veiled in apparent mystery, and he enjoys the flattering persuasion that such elucidation will tend to inspire in the bosoms

of his fellow countrymen one unanimous sentiment—love, esteem and veneration for every individual member of that august Family comprehended in these memoirs.

Every-body affects to know something of "The Enquiry;"—it is true, the leading features of it cannot have more publicity, though the minutiæ may be better understood. It is to be lamented that the "Enquiry" was agitated at all,—but once agitated, it was more to be regretted that a circumstantial detail of particulars was not submitted, *in an honest way*, to a Nation, whose interests it so seriously involved. Had *that* been the case, the love of justice, which so pre-eminently cha-

racterizes Englishmen, would have been conspicuously demonstrated by the adoption of sentiments, other than those now too generally entertained, and which the Editor endeavours, from laudable motives, to counteract.

The Editor pledges himself that his work is formed upon the basis of the suppressed Book, which was placed for that express purpose in his hands; and he also declares that the original facts and interesting anecdotes with which his pages are illuminated, are derived from a source equally authentic and incontrovertible.

It has been lately ascertained that a few copies of the "Delicate Investiga-

tion" (said to be *surreptitiously* taken) are yet extant. It will be however a matter of future congratulation to the Public that after the publication of these Memoirs the still existing copies of that infamous and slanderous detail will no longer be considered as of the *inestimable value* with which they have been heretofore contemplated.

THOMAS ASHE,

EDITOR.

LETTER I.

CAROLINE *to* CHARLOTTE.

IT is with the utmost reluctance, my dear girl, that I review my life. But I am forced into the Arena to defend my honor and reputation; having been branded with the grossest suspicions and charges, by my civil and sacerdotal Accusers, whose conduct, during "THE DELICATE ENQUIRY," evinces, that this country is arrived at that state of depravity, which the Romans attained previously to the ruin and dissolution of their empire.

Indeed when almost the whole of my Acccusers directly countenanced a most savage and unnatural enquiry, and with unparalleled effrontery called for an investigation into my conduct, (the minutes of which investigation they durst not for their own sakes expose), I think I see their characters accurately drawn by Juvenal: I see that hardened audacity, the last refuge of detected guilt, mentioned by Tacitus in speaking of the infamous Messalina. God forbid I should involve the innocent with the guilty! There are, I hope, many of the first description; but alas! they bear no proportion to the latter—at least amongst my Accusers.

But "The Book" is suppressed, and you are told, that I, your unfortunate mother, am not to be estimated at any value since "the Enquiry" was thought necessary to be pursued.

Fatal and unquestionable appears the truth of this assertion. "The Enquiry" has, in truth, made my life teem with misery and with shame. It has deliberately exposed me to censure and contempt. It exhibits me as a wretched outcast from society, who merits the scoffs and the scorns of a merciless world. It has set me adrift upon the tempestuous ocean of my own passions when they are most irritated and headstrong. It has cut me out from the moorings of these domestic obligations, by whose cable I might ride at safety from their turbulence. It has robbed me of the society of my husband and my daughter. It has deprived me of the powerful influence which arises from the sense of HOME, from the sacred religion of the HEARTH, in quelling the passions, in reclaiming the wanderings, in correcting the disorders of the human heart.

Yes, my child, "The Enquiry" has cruelly bereaved me of the protection of these attachments: and it is but too fatally true, that I am no longer to be estimated at any value. I am no longer worth any thing: faded, fallen, degraged, and disgraced, I am worth less than nothing! But it is for the honor, the hope, the expectation, the tenderness, and the comforts that have been blasted by "the Enquiry," and that have fled from me for ever, that I write these memoirs for you and for posterity.

It is not, therefore, my Charlotte, my present value which you are to weigh; but it is my value at that time when I sat basking in a father's and in a mother's love; with the blessing of Heaven on my head, and its purity in my heart;—when I sat amongst my own princely family, and heard the morali-

ty of a parental board;—estimate, my child, that past value; compare it with its present deplorable diminution, in consequence of a political marriage, and of an *interested* enquiry, and may it lead you to form some judgment of the severity of the injury inflicted on me by such a marriage, and the extent of the compensation which is due to me by the authors of such an enquiry.

CAROLINE

LETTER II.

Mean, degraded, and contemptible as I am rendered by "the Enquiry," I will still endeavour to prove, my Charlotte, that I have strong and heavy claims both upon your affection and upon the attachment and respect of the community.

But my accusers contend that I am the author of my own sufferings, and that I ought to suffer for the ill consequences of my own conduct.

In what part of "The Book" do you find any foundation for that assertion? In no part.—But my Accusers say that I indulged in dress, in company, in a

fondness for the society of men of merit and letters; and in a love for ——— for ——— and for ———!!! This, say they, constitutes my crime! Odious and impudent aggravation of injury—to add calumny to insults, and outrage to dishonor! From whom but men hacknied in the paths of shame and vice; from whom but WOMEN having no compunctions in their own breasts to restrain them, could you expect such brutal disregard for the feelings of others?—from whom but the cold-blooded Lawyer;—from what but the exhausted mind, the habitual community with shame;—from what but the habitual contempt of virtue and of man, could you have expected the arrogance, the barbarity, and the folly of such foul, because so unnatural imputations against me?

My Accusers should have reflected, and have blushed, before they suffered such vile charges to have passed their lips.

Where is the single fact in "THE BOOK" on which the remotest suspicion of a criminal kind can be hung?

Odiously have my Accusers endeavoured to make the softest and most amiable feelings of the heart, the pretext of their slanderous imputations: Captains P——E and M——Y distinguished and honorable officers of the navy, my first acquaintances in this country; Sir J—— D——s and a MIDSHIPMAN, the one the husband and the other the son of a lady, the dearest friend I possess. Sir S——Y S——H a man whom every body loves, and an ORPHAN, the child of one of the most amiable women that ever lived, were

charges brought against me as a crime;—and a respect for them, arising from the softness of nature, and a sense of merit, is made the scene and the testimony of guilt!

But how just soever the complaints are, which my sufferings force from me, I shall say nothing that may augment the blemishes of my Accusers.

Giddy, inexperienced youth, unbounded generosity, and gratitude; an inclination, natural to innocence, of judging well of every body, and the indulgence of the best of parents, all concurred, when cruelly separated from my husband, to inspire me with a love of society, and to that particular kind with which I was prepossessed before my unfortunate and guilty elevation. On this charge, then, I will not further weary you, or exhaust myself. I will

add nothing more than that the charges against me, and against the persons I have named, are as false as they are infamous; that in "THE BOOK" they have not a colour of support; and that before I conclude this correspondence, I shall convince you, that the public should brand them with the strongest reprobation and reproach.

Tired, and the night advancing, I must conclude with the assurance of being your

CAROLINE.

LETTER III.

But "The Book" contains a charge against me, which I feel it proper to discuss; for I trust, my dear girl, you observe that I affect not any address to your passions, by which you may be led away from the subject. I assume merely to separate the parts of the affecting case of your mother, and to lay them item by item, before you, with the coldness of detail, and not with any colouring or display of fiction, of fancy, or of untruth.

The charge I allude to, is "indiscreet confidences and acquaintances." Honorable to myself is my unsuspecting confidence! Besides, to what a horri-

ble alternative is it meant that English wives should be reduced?—Are they to be immured by worse than eastern barbarity? Are their principles to be depraved; their passions sublimated; every finer motive of action extinguished by the inevitable consequences of thus treating them like slaves? Is confidence and hospitality to be interpreted into guilt and indiscretion? And is a liberal and generous confidence in them, to be the instrument of the calumniator and the basis of crime?

I must proceed a little further. My miserable Accusers, it seems, when their brain was on fire, and every fiend of hell was let loose upon their hearts, say that I received *marked* attentions; heard unwarrantable topics of discourse respecting your father's friends, and that when any gentleman proposed to take a glass of wine, or to hand me

into my carriage, I tamely granted the honor, without attending to my high station or to my exalted rank!

Alas! my Charlotte, honorably, but fatally for my repose, I am neither jealous, suspicous nor cruel. I treated my FRIENDS with the confidence of FRIENDS; and I never suspected that my Accusers would aggravate my innocent attachments into a colour of factious licentiousness and vicious impiety. I never suspected that such innocent attachments could be employed for the purpose of swelling the disorders of my heart, and of cutting off you, my child, from the INHERITANCE to which you are entitled, by virtue of your mother's unfortunate marriage. But surely if my Accusers have no pity for me, they must have mercy upon my innocent and helpless Child; they cannot now, having no evidence in "THE BOOK," con-

demn you to neglect and DISINHERITANCE; they cannot Now strike you into that most dreadful of all human conditions, the orphanage that springs not from the grave, that falls not from the hand of Providence, or the stroke of death; but that which comes before its time, anticipated and inflicted by the remorseless cruelty of Accusers, who HAVE an INTEREST in the establishment of parental guilt!

Who HAD "an interest" I should have said; for, balancing on the pivot of your destiny, their hearts could not be cold, nor their tongues be wordless. Destitute of evidence, they could not make you, like me, a wretched fugitive. They also saw yawning sepulchres between them and their design; and, from the faded refuse of a bed they vainly attempted to prove violated, they discovered testimony upon which they

were convinced the public would repose the most implicit faith. They examined and found nothing that could degrade a child to which nature bore evidence in legible characters ; they looked in your face, and received the most irrefragable proofs of the sacred observance of my obligations, and of the pledges of my fidelity. They looked at my conduct, and, aggravated and blotted as it was by their odious and calumniating proceedings, they mitigated YOUR destiny, although they have turned ME over to a life of irretrievable ignominy and abhorrence.

Before I can enter on the detail of "an Enquiry" which, for darkness of mystery and boldness of imposition has never been paralleled, I find, my dear child, that it is incumbent on me to describe to you my earliest days, and the causes which led to a marriage that

has been followed by such deep and lasting calamity. The voice of honour, the voice of nature, and the voice of "THE PEOPLE," call for the most minute detail from me, and I shall piously obey such sacred calls when recovered from the fatigue of this Letter.

Adieu, my dear maid,

CAROLINE.

LETTER IV.

The family from which I descend, my amiable Charlotte, and the circle of Germany to which I belong, were memorable at the earliest period of antiquity. The House of HASBURGH has been celebrated by every historian, and STRABO informs us, that, from the most remote times, its country was distinguished for its wealth and fertility; by the wisdom of its laws, and by the military and proud disposition of its inhabitants.

To this last disposition perhaps it is owing, that its modern history does not correspond to its ancient lustre. A people of soldiers whose trade was their sword, they lived on terms of defiance with all mankind. This proved fatal

to their interests; and it induced my father who was the head of this people, to instigate Prussia to rescue France from the grasp of usurpation, and to carry war to the very gates of the capital.

It is commonly supposed that the presumption, or ignorance of my father, was the spring and origin of this romantic undertaking. There is no greater error!—It is to a high and honourable spirit, that the conduct of the Duke is to be attributed.

My father,—the man whose virtues I shall ever praise, and whose abilities I shall ever admire, was certainly the first who advised the grand idea of a general confederation. And he was moved to it by the melancholy sufferngs of the emigrants, and by a hope, that by marching rapidly into France,

he should suppress the designs of the treasonable, and bring effectual succour to the cause of the royalists. He also thought that, while France was lacerated by internal wars, and the hand of every man was armed against his brother, that this deplorable scene could only be brought to a conclusion by an armed mediator, and that, if a sufficient force were seen under the walls of Paris, discord, would cease, and France herself would again prosper and be happy.

When in this light, my dear girl, we view the conduct of the unfortunate Duke, it will not perhaps appear dictated by that wild enthusiasm to which it is generally ascribed, nor to that folly to which the multitude have been directed to impute it. Therefore, whenever you hear his name mentioned, do you advocate his cause; and tell his calum-

nators, that he gave celebrity to his country; that he decorated it with many monuments of glory, and that he has given a certain instinctive veneration to that distant and venerable spot, which must seize on every mind possessed of the smallest respect for virtue and honor.

Returning from this digression into the state of public affairs, I shall now observe, generally, that when the minds of men, from a concurrence of circumstances, have been long exposed to certain impressions, it matters not with what disgust, or even horror, they were at first received, gradually they became familiarized with them, and reason, or, what by them is called reason, will soon be disposed to give them its solemn approbation.—My father returned to his country, and the troops of Prussia became as licentious as the

troops of France; while her Queen was content to weave a garment for the very enemy whom her consort, aided by my father, vainly attempted to subdue!

But among the many calamities which resulted to my country from the war, there was none more to be lamented, than that ferocious and unfeeling disposition with which it inspired the mass of its inhabitants.—I had known my country and the disposition and manners of the people before the war. I had known them to be gentle, humane, and possessed, perhaps of more of the milk of human kindness than the lower order of the people in most countries possess. Whereas I found them, after some continuance of war, with quite a new set of feelings; they had become familiar with cruelty; they could talk of torture and of death—not

of the death of an individual, but of the slaughter of thousands; with the same apathy and listlessness as they would have spoken of an every-day incident. Death, and suffering, and cruelty, seemed for them to have lost all their horror; and I have heard the officers about my father relate the fall of thousands with a degree of circumstantial and cool accuracy, which proved that they felt in the relation the most perfect indifference.

I have a motive, my Charlotte, for entering into these particulars. It is to explain to you how I passed through the thorny path of early life without being drawn astray by the seduction of the passions.—I wish to convince you that I neither wanted youth, bloom, nor admirers, but that I thought the period, I have described, too degenerate;—and I determined within myself not to sully

my first affections by bestowing them upon any man, not claiming pre-eminence from splendid abilities, humanity of heart, and unspotted fame.—You are not therefore to weary, or to conceive that to be idle digression, which, in the end you will find necessary to the honor of your affectionate

CAROLINE.

LETTER V.

I CANNOT resolve, as yet, to communicate to my lovely child the details of my own life. My country has prior claims to my attention.

The fame which it formerly acquired by its seminaries of learning, and by the just administration of my ancestors, engage the whole of my mind. But besides the cultivation of literature and the observance of the laws of hospitality and justice, a number of visitors were attracted by the serenity of the climate, the fertility of the soil and the refinements of the capital, which rivaled most of the cities of the German circles. But, at the period I speak of, a detestable war had converted our citizens into

mere soldiers, and destroyed the affections and dignity of their nature. They became as passive as the sword with which they fought. They surrendered themselves, as far as men could surrender themselves, body and soul, to the absolute disposal of the King of Prussia. They became the wretched instruments of that bloody ambition, with which he meant to desolate the earth. They were bought and sold like the beasts of the field. As blood-hounds they were trained up to be let loose upon the peaceable inhabitants of France, in an unsuspecting hour to ravage and destroy!

Why confine myself to the military of my annihilated country!—What are the standing armies of the fairest and most civilized portions of the earth?—What are they, but dreadful diseases in the body politic, growing out of the ig-

norance and untoward circumstances of past times, which princes knew too well how to convert to the aggrandisement of their power, and the gratification of their lusts?—What are they, but enormous and expensive machines of destruction, moved and directed by all the malignant and all the petty passions of the human heart; by the pride, the revenge, the ambition of kings and of ministers; by the jealousies and intrigues of sycophants and prostitutes? —What are they, my child, but destroying hurricanes, which sweep away at once the fruits and the cultivators of the soil; the products and the means of industry, the monuments of literature, and the arts, the works of ages, in the tempest of an hour?

Viewing the military in such a light, and detesting my countrymen for the dreadful change which the war operated

on their character and manners, it is by no means a matter of surprize, that the hidden feelings of my soul should not have been disclosed, or that I should have so long remained a stranger to love —and to all its delights or calamities. —Alas! I little thought, when most tranquil and secure, that the pleasures and misfortunes of my life were about to commence. I little thought that my happiness should so soon raise the envy, and my disappointments the contempt of the world. Charlotte! read with attention the following letters, and drop a tear on my sad reverse of fortune, and it will console 'till death your

CAROLINE.

LETTER VI.

Among the officers who served under my father with the highest reputation was a young Irishman of the name of C****** B*****.—I prefer, however, to call him Algernon, and to introduce him, for the present, to you under that name.

If a life spent in the zealous cultivation of moral virtue, and the most assiduous endeavours for promoting both public and private happiness, deserve to be recorded, it is that of Algernon, whose name will be held in veneration in my country, as long as extraordinary merit shall be admired or remembered.

Algernon was originally destined for

arms, but, from the liberal education he had received he did not pursue the profession with the cold sentiments of a German, a robber, or a murderer.—On the contrary, he often preferred, at the feet of Minerva, to sacrifice all the military pomp which blazes round the car of the god of war. And in that period of which I have spoken with the most pointed reprobation; in that period, perhaps the darkest of any in history, he explored all the walks of literature; exhausted the Greek and Roman page: studied music, painting, and poetry: disputation and eloquence; bore the palm from all his rivals, and rose on the ruins of his masters far above the eminence of those gentlemen, his con-temporaries, with whom my father's friends were in the habit of associating.

After having attained, by the exertions of valour, the power of genius,

and the exercise of every virtue, to a certain rank in his profession, and to the head of the literary world, it was not unnatural for him to wish to relax from his efforts, and to enjoy his consequence and his pleasure in the corresponding attractions of my father's court. Perhaps LOVE was his principal motive. There were many beautiful women attached to the court. Let us rather say, then, that the generous impulse of love, not the pre-conceived views of pleasure or of seduction, prompted him to procure admission to the society of my friends.—Indeed he had but few difficulties to encounter. The admiration procured by the celebrity of his military and literary fame, prepared both my father and my mother to meet his ambition with the warmest attentions, and the struggle was, who should possess most of the time and society of Algernon.

At this particular time I was in the bloom of youth: and, if not esteemed for beauty, I was celebrated for elegance, literature, and wit. But I had no pretensions; and if I ever thought of Algernon it was connected with the idea of which of the ladies of the court might be distinguished by his choice. In truth he was too bright a star to be the slave or the subject of individual admiration. There was not a person who did not ardently wish to see, and to emulate him.—When he appeared in public, every one ran to behold him, and when he withdrew, every eye sprang forward to pursue him. Independent of these attractions, he possessed, indeed, two qualifications, a tone of voice, and a grace in singing, which gave him a controul over every female heart. These powers were peculiarly his; at least I never beheld them fall to the share of any other.

—To soften, by playful amusement, the stern character of a military court, he composed several sonnets on love and manners. These he was often prevailed on to sing, when the harmony of his voice gave new charms to the expression.—In short, in all circles nothing was talked of but Algernon;—even the most ignorant, who could not judge of composition, were enchanted by the melody of his voice. Female hearts were unable to resist the impression.—Thus was his name carried through Germany. And the accomplishments of Algernon became the theme of every tongue.—Instructed by nature and enlightened by taste, he combined all these beauties which are widely scattered among the rest of his sex. Nor could such a man ever have existed, if nature had confined her imitation to a single subject. The surprizing character of his person and

mind, owed its perfection to the collected charms accorded to man.—But, I cannot proceed. Besides, what had I to do with beauty or deformity, grandeur or horror; an adorned mind, or an untutored genius? What was Algernon to me? Did he glitter in my father's palace with any other design than to pursue the object of his love, or solely for the gratification of amusement? Did he———I must refer my child to my next letter.

CAROLINE.

LETTER VII.

I OMITTED to tell you in my last, my dear girl, that the principal triumph of Algernon, consisted in his having procured the respect and esteem of my adorable mother, the Duchess of Hasburgh. So great, indeed, was her opinion of his virtue and abilities, that she frequently confided me to his instruction, and afforded him every opportunity of perfecting my knowledge in the English language, and in the Belles-Lettres.

Before I detail the circumstances of our studious hours, or relate the progress I made under so intelligent a master, I feel it my duty to make you more intimately acquainted with my

mother, and to add a few particulars to the observations I have already made on the private and public conduct of the Duke, my father.

But every one knows the character of the Duchess; that she is of the most noble family, an interesting person, and one of the most amiable of women. Now advancing in the vale of life, she is like those statues of the SILENI;—if you only view their outside, nothing can be less captivating: but when examined internally, they are found to contain within them the images of all the gods.—Thus at first, seeing and hearing the discourses of my mother, they appear harsh. She talks of the beauty of virtue, the baseness of vice, and the folly of a dishonorable life. She endeavours to persuade every body to fix their affections on the most deserving objects, and to regal their

thoughts from criminal indulgencies and mistaken friendships; on this account strangers are apt to think her too severe and moralizing; but, my Charlotte, if you unfold and look into her sentiments, you find that there is the most profound sense and goodness in every word; that her admonitions are divine; that they contain the images of all the virtues, and all the precepts necessary to form a great and a good character!—Were I not suspected of being too partial, I would declare how much I have always been affected, ravished, and amazed on hearing her naked words. Distracted, my heart has leapt for joy, or my eyes suffused with tears. I have heard many amiable women, but I never felt the same effects; my soul was never confounded;—I was not enraged at myself for any follies of my life, nor ever wished it in my power to correct those follies. Her admonition,

—her's alone, could extort the confession that I was indigent of many virtues which she possessed; that I should neglect nothing to acquire them, and that I should devote myself entirely to the study of her example. Ah! my child, should I listen to her at present, I know I should no longer remain mistress of myself, but be as formerly corrected, improved, and transported! —But I am condemned to seal up my ears. I must run off, and fly, lest the charms of her conversation remind me of the degradation of my present state, and of the height from which I have fallen.—Yet, I must not shun her; confusion and remorse seize on me.—I have broken all my promises! —I am conscious of the truth of all her reproaches!—I am conscious it is my duty to act as she advises!— But the moment she is gone love and despair overcome me! How of-

ten have I wished her dead for condemning my weakness ;—yet, if it happened, I know not,—I am sure, I know not, who would feel a deeper sorrow !

The struggle of my soul is too great for the continuance of the subject, and I cannot explain to you in this letter what is meant by the alarming and terrible expression of "*love and despair overcome me.*" Nor are you to understand, that the "*struggle of my soul,*" is between Virtue and Vice. Were this the case I should indeed be miserable and merit to be so. No, my child, be assured, before you conclude this correspondence, your only difficulty will be, which to admire most, the dignity with which I have supported virtue, or the manner in which I endure insult and calamity. In the mean time I shall give you the

promised observations on the Duke of Hasburgh.

My father was, as I before may have informed you, of the first blood in Germany, a beautiful person; the bravest, the most gallant, and the most ambitious of men. At Berlin he was the first in power and authority: commanded the armies, and gained several battles.

In the midst of his glories, the Duchess used to speak to him frankly of his pride, vain-glory, restless ambition, immense thirst for power, and asked him, "Whether he would live satisfied with his present enjoyments, or die instantly, if excluded from acquiring more?" He was silent. "You would rather choose to die" said the Duchess! "It seems, then," said he, "you know my thoughts perfectly well;

be it so; should I contradict you, my intended conduct would soon persuade you to the contrary." These words, alas! were prophetic. Mount Jena is an eternal monument both of his ambition and of his worth. But he was not to blame.—The rupture of Prussia with France, *at that exact time*, was not of his advising.—A rupture, connected with the vilest fraud, and followed by the basest submission, that ever disgraced any country. It could have nothing in common with my father, but it will stand a monument of reproach and infamy to Prussia, as long as history or tradition can hand it down. Nor will posterity easily believe, that her wretched sovereign, without knowledge, abilities or bravery, should find support and safety, in the very bosom of a kingdom which he had sold, insulted, and betrayed. The system he has since pursued, must afford still

higher astonishment to his ruined descendants! Farewell! I have exhausted my patience on this wretched theme.

CAROLINE.

LETTER VIII.

Of the persons in the esteem of the valued parents whose portrait, my beloved girl, I sketched for your information in my last, none stood higher than Algernon. And, as I have somewhere before remarked, such was their opinion of his talents and integrity, that they afforded him every opportunity of instructing me in those accomplishments which he himself so eminently possessed.

In this important occupation, Algernon shewed himself worthy of the trust reposed in him. He had no other views than finding out the truth for my improvement, and laying before me

such important maxims, as would be most useful in the conduct of life: And whether he discoursed on religion and divine matters, or on abstract points, as on the nature and immateriality of the soul; on politics and morals, he so discussed every subject, as always to investigate, and if possible to discover and separate what was real and natural, from what was fictitious and artificial. If talking on physics; the properties and laws of motion in the heavenly bodies; if on ethics, the passions and affections of the human heart were carefully enquired into, the powers of each examined, and the regard due to them ascertained. His dissertations, whether on divine or human affairs, ended not in empty metaphysical speculations, but were all calculated to kindle a love to the Deity, and to instruct me in all the various duties of distinguished life: To advance and main-

tain every grand truth; to recommend the beauty and inherent worth of virtue, and to condemn the infamy and turpitude of vice.

Instruction thus carried on, became every day more delightful and interesting to me. Besides, in his instruction, Algernon was natural and easy; often witty, and full of humour; his railleries exquisite, and such as became a complete gentleman: his reasoning refined and metaphysical. In short, the sentiment, ingenuity and good humour of Algernon; his lively descriptions, frequent ironies, and just strokes of satire, when set in opposition to the intemperance of language, the passionate surly behaviour, clumsy wit, sour repartees, and personal invectives of the German literati, formed a captivating contrast, and set him off to the utmost possible advantage. In his dis-

quisitions with them, where his design was only to confute, he had no occasion to advance any doctrines of his own. But in his conversations with me, he advanced and maintained all the grand truths concerning the Deity, the immortality of the soul, &c. &c. and always offered the strongest arguments that could be advanced in the support of them.

Conversing with him one evening on the question, "*whether virtue can be taught?*" he encouraged me to make some observations. Emboldened by the ease and elegance of his manner, I complied. Indeed he led me on step by step. Dealt most gently with me; extolled me for my knowledge; dropped his own usual flow of eloquence; appeared fond of being instructed by me; listened with seeming attention, and by degrees made me lay open the

absurdity of my notions, and my ignorance in those things which my former instructors pretended I perfectly understood. And having presumed I convinced him "that virtue can he taught," I could not help feeling disappointed to find by his arguments, that it cannot be taught; that it is a divine inspired gift; a blessing implanted in him who is possessed of it, not coming from his own intelligence, nor from the intelligence of others—but from God.

In proving this, and after confuting my opinions, he stopped. To have gone further and made me formally own my ignorance, and submit to new instruction, would have been inconsistent with his character. However, tinged as I was with some degree of superstition; having a profound reverence for the original instructions I had received; believing every fable taught

me from my infancy; full of family pride and self-conceit, and convinced that virtue could be taught, I replied to Algernon with less grace and judgment, than vexation and asperity.

"You confound me," said I, "Algernon! You are like the Torpedo, which benumbs every thing it touches; thus have you benumbed me both in body and in mind: I thought I had known virtue, but you have quite perplexed me."

'Not so like as you imagine,' replied he, calmly; 'if the Torpedo had the faculty of benumbing *itself* as well as others, it would resemble me more. I do not, when certain myself, raise doubts in others: I am rather myself the most doubtful of all men; this is the reason why I suggest difficulties to you: but I have offended you: I shall

drop the question, and in future correct myself.'

Will you believe it, Charlotte, although sensible of his wisdom and of my own weakness, I suffered him to retire with a cold indifference. I was quite confounded, but pride would not allow me to call him back; it would not allow me to humble and to expose myself; to tell him that I admired all he said, and that I should hearken to all he had to say: No; pride would not allow me to do this, and I suffered him to depart, with a cold indifference. Confounded and perplexed, I retired to my study, and saw no more of HIM, till the following day.

CHARLOTTE.

LETTER IX.

The morning after I had separated from Algernon with "a cold indifference," I descended to my mother's library to breakfast. Algernon rose with a studied politeness, handed me a chair, and seated me by the Duchess, instead of next to himself, which was his usual practice.

Trifling as this incident may appear to you, my interesting girl, it inspired me with the most painful sensations, nor were their poignancy removed on perceiving, that he resumed his place by the side of the Countess of W——r, with whom he had been previously engaged in conversation, and who was considered to be the most beautiful and

accomplished woman of any of the German courts.

As I may have occasion to mention this Countess, whose name is Melina on many other occasions, I will here inform you that she is the eldest daughter of an Austrian nobleman of the highest rank.

A good natural capacity, an ambitious desire of knowledge, and the seeds of the finest dispositions began early to shew themselves in her mind. Her affectionate father, observing such promising symptoms, and having a just sense of the great importance of a good education, took great care that her mind should be formed to such a sense of virtue and religion, and such a taste for valuable knowledge, as might render her happy in herself, an ornament to

her family, and useful in her rank in the world.

Unfortunately, however, for Melina, her father made choice of one of his chaplains for her instructor. Foremost in delusion, in bigotry, in cruelty, and in aptness at all the stratagems of priesthood; alike successful as an orator at the altar, or a leader in a brothel, was father Rosenbergh, of pious celebrity.

This noxious energy of character raised himself from the situation of an outcast excommunicate priest, to be first director in the family of Baron W——r, to the tutorship of his amiable daughter. But you shall judge for yourself, of her progress, my Charlotte, as I shall return to her, and to the manner of conversation with Algernon.

Algernon was silent. Melina maintained the disquisition. I must confess she had some beauties of diction peculiar to herself: she affected a grandeur of style, and often obtained it, though not always to that high degree she intended. She designed that her words should be both sublime and becoming; and sometimes they were so: but they were also frequently rough, unpolished, and ranged in an original, not in a natural manner. This made her often obsure and confused; inaccurate and elaborate in her ornaments; and by an anxious endeavour to astonish Algernon, she fell into excesses of novelty, which still further involved her in perplexity and darkness. That is, her style was at once concise, abrupt, and unintelligible, although sometimes a certain purity and brightness burst forth, and dazzled like a flash of lightning in a gloomy evening. On the

whole, her conversation was marked with roughness and severity: sweetness—the sweetness of Algernon, was not a little foreign to her manner.

The time was very favorable to their discussion. It was a rainy morning; and breakfast being over, the Duke retired to his private study, and the Duchess and I sitting at work, as if inattentive to the discourse, they proceeded without the terror of criticism or interruption.

The subject was religion, or perhaps, rather irreligion. Seriously, my Charlotte, to one who has not well and often considered this subject, 'tis scarce possible to imagine how large a part of what most people miscall religion, is but the prevailing bias of their natural disposition, screening itself under that sacred character and appearance. And

the misfortune is the greater, as 'tis hardly possible to undeceive them. Errors in religion, are the most stubborn things in nature. Nothing is so inflexible as conscience, when once it is set wrong. It darkens the mind to such a fatal degree, that conviction comes to be dreaded as a crime, and even blindness itself is esteemed sacred. If you go about to shew these deluded people to themselves, they cannot endure the pain of the representation. They have been so long used to confound their own prejudices about religion, with religion itself, that if they are but touched in these tender points, immediately they raise a cry and alarm, as if you were erasing the very foundations of all religion, and common morality. But as these reflections rose out of the conversation between Algernon and Melina, you shall form your own opinions from that conversation, which

shall appear word for word in my next letter. Do not be deterred from perusing that conversation, although upon a religious subject it is highly illuminated with interesting matter.

CAROLINE.

LETTER X.

I RESUME without ceremony, my dear Charlotte, the subject of my last letter.

" Do you know the general character of D'Aremberg?" said Melina to Algernon, " did you ever hear that he is a religious character, and that he did not take this turn till he had met with a disappointment in love?"

' The idea is pleasant enough,' replied Algernon, ' but I never thought there had been any alliance between the passions of love and religious enthusiasm: it may be granted, indeed, that there is generally an enthusiasm in love;

but certainly it is of a very different kind from what is called such in religion.'

" 'Tis only the same passion," interrupted Melina, " differently applied and exercised. Believe me, enthusiasm has been more indebted to converts to the quarter of disappointed love, than to any other whatsoever. If they find not the expected returns of their passion upon earth, nothing more reasonable than for them to take refuge in Heaven. They transfer their passions from mere mortals, to a spiritual and divine object, and love in them is sublimated into devotion."

' There cannot surely,' said Algernon, ' be conceived a more unworthy and degrading apprehension of the divinity, than to imagine him more pleased with the ungoverned sallies of devout phren-

zy; the wild transports of such heated enthusiam, than with the rational, sober, and manly exercise of true and substantial virtue, goodness, and benevolence. Believe me, Countess, the only rational way of recommending ourselves to the Deity, is by imitating Him as far as we are able: and there is nothing by which we approach to a nearer resemblance of Him, than by an active, and diffusive goodness. But the sober pursuits of unaffected virtue, are too remiss and lifeless for such warm and sanguine tempers as you speak of. To serve God by doing good to man, will not answer their purpose. Their passion is towards an ecstatic species of religion; a religion, like themselves, made up of violence and flame.'

Here my mother could not forbear expressing her approbation of Algernon's sentiments. I rose my head from

my work. His attention was fixed upon me. I resumed my work to hide the blushes which diffused my cheek. Melina appeared hurt.—Rosenbergh—a villain or an enthusiast, had given her a taste for this devout passion from the first moment he instructed her. She was bred a religious-inamorato with the most assiduous care. The turn of her instruction, her reading, her conversations lay all that way. She was so early accustomed to see enthusiasm substituted for religion, that she insensibly caught the same spirit and turn of thinking. She had practised this devotional habit so long, that she became thoroughly encamoured of it; it was wrought into her very make and constitution, and without her knowledge, or ever having acted in the least improper, the rise and source of her piety lay in her passions. She was a sort of religious *debauchée*, instructed by Ro-

senberg to find out the art of reconciling grace and nature, piety and sensuality; and to unite, to an uncommon strictness and sanctity, a most refined, though disguised sort of self-indulgence.

Recovering somewhat from her confusion and embarrassment—

"Would you then," said she, to Algernon, "allow no scope to the passions in religion? That would indeed effectually purge it of intemperate heats; but will it not be running too far back into the chilling extreme? Are not our passions the springs of action in our ordinary concerns; without such passions would not life itself be apt to stagnate? May not some such quickening influence be equally necessary in our religious affairs? Our prayers particularly, if they be not warmed and

enlivened with some degrees of fervency and intenseness, would they not degenerate into a mere lifeless indifferency, a cold and formal lip-service? Are you ignorant that no less a man than the pope, condemned a bishop in a severe penalty, for defining prayer to be "A CALM, UNDISTURBED ADDRESS TO GOD!" A doctrine similar to that which you have just now advanced?"

'You mistake the point, lovely Countess,' returned Algernon, 'warmth and earnestness in any good sense are by no means inconsistent with being calm and undisturbed, which is opposed, not to a fixed rational intention of mind in our religious exercises, a serious recollected frame of spirit; but to the artificial heats and transports of a wanton imagination, and an enthusiastic fancy; that gross, and mechanical

sort of devotion, which writers of the mystic class, describe as accompanied with—'*a sensible commotion of the spirits, and estuation of the blood.*' This is horrible. Believe me, it is shameful to have recourse to our passions in order to give life and vigour to our religious exercises, when our calm rational affections, a much nobler part of our composition, are abundantly sufficient to all wise and good purposes of doing this. These will inspire warmth without flame, and strength without violence. So that we shall be able to pray at once with the spirit, with all the earnestness of a devout recollection, but without the paroxisms of devout phrenzy, which the illuminati of Germany, and the methodists of England are so fond of recommending. The sacred scriptures know nothing of those passionate ecstacies.—Where do we read of raptures, suspensions; of starings on

the divine beauty, expiring in the bosom of our Maker, in the inspired pages? What mention is there ever made of the refined transports of seraphic love, the mystic union, and all the other fanciful abstractions of enthusiastic pietists? These are the dreams and inventions of men, not the doctrine of Christ and his apostles.—But,' exclaimed Algernon, suddenly rising from his seat, 'I had the misfortune to offend the Princess Caroline by arguing against her conviction last night. I must not incur your displeasure, lovely Countess, this morning.'

On hearing my name mentioned, I looked up with timidity. He bowed with an expression of sensibility, and left the room. My mother praised—Melina admired, and I ——— alas! what were my sentiments towards him?—Did I praise, did I admire, did

I———?—my child! I cannot gratify your curiosity till some future letter. Know me, however, for your attached

CAROLINE.

LETTER XI.

I FEEL convinced that you are so far from being wearied with my report of our conferences with Algernon, that you wish to engage me to recollect all the particulars that have passed between him, Melina, and myself.

Perhaps, too, you conjecture that I have a fondness for such recollections. Your conjecture, my Charlotte, is not ill founded. Having heard so much of his conversation, particularly that with Melina, I was not easily disengaged from it. I was ever and anon relapsing insensibly into the same train of thought his last discourse inspired; pursuing and applying the words "lovely Countess," and his "offending Princess Caroline,"

and thus torturing myself to such a degree, that I could scarce converse upon any-thing however foreign to it, but it served in some way or other to renew the doubts, the hopes, the fears, and the impression.

Gracious God! what doubts, what hopes, what fears, what impression? Do not those terms explain in a beautiful and affecting manner, the origin and the enthusiasm of some romantic passion? What passion did I feel? What passion could I feel? Algernon! a stranger, without fortune or rank! And I, a Princess royally endowed and allied! Could there be any hopes on my part, any pretensions on his? No, certainly! Therefore, my alarm soon appeared groundless, and I attributed the emotion I felt to a desire to know whether Melina, whom he called the "lovely Countess," was in truth the happy object of his choice.

With a mind thus tranquillized, and a resolution thus determined to discover Melina's fate, the first favorable opportunity, I took a solitary ramble, and after a few turns discovered Algernon sitting at the end of a favourite walk in the garden, with a book in his hand; and so seemingly intent upon what he was reading, that I had got near enough to speak to him, before he had discovered any-thing of me.

Upon my wishing him good morning by name, he rose up in haste, and coming with a confused eagerness towards me, returned the salutation, and with accents which distinguish the genuine sincerity of the friend, from the counterfeit complaisance of the mere well-bred man.

As soon as our first interview was over, and I, seated by him, endeavour-

ing to assume that openness of soul, and flow of good-humour which ever formed my natural character,—

"What grave moralist, Algernon," said I, "were you conversing with just now, who had so engaged your attention, that you saw nothing of me, as I came along the walk, till I discovered myself by speaking to you?"

'Perhaps,' returned he, 'you will not be of opinion my studies were so very serious, when I tell you it was a piece of English poetry I was perusing; but,' continued he, 'my disquisitions have given you offence, I would not that my studies were to be attended with a like calamity.'

This gentle reproach was uttered with so much sentiment and tremulation of voice, that I felt my heart swell

with remorse and sorrow. My eyes filled with tears, and I was about to solicit his forgiveness for the "cold indifference" with which I lately separated from him, when, with a generous indignation, he saved me from such humility; taking me by the hand, and saying——

'A nature so transcendently kind and excellent, can give no offence. Suspicion or evil must be foreign to a being of such angelic goodness and beneficence! A mind like yours, is one of those choicer bounties of Heaven, which are bestowed only on some few exalted and favorite spirits. You are' ——'but pardon me,' said he, interrupting himself, and withdrawing his hand, which I had neither courage nor precaution to resign, 'pardon me, I should have told you, that it was to Mr. Pope's Windsor Forest, to which

I was indebted for entertainment when you entered the garden. I had been reviewing a favorite passage of mine there, and was pursuing a train of reflections, which it had suggested to me.'

"Perhaps," said I, "you will oblige me so far as to communicate some share of your garden entertainment to your friend, and admit me as a party with you, in these your evening meditations: this will be an effectual means to check any farther sallies of pride or irratability, and to reduce me from that artificial height to which ignorance had raised me, to the more valuable exercise of reasoning and philosophy."

'How much you delight and honor me,' replied Algernon, 'but the subject I was upon, is pretty extensive, and we shall hardly be able to go through

with it to-night.—It will not be long before we shall be called to supper: it will serve to entertain you, perhaps, another evening. To-morrow—if you will allow me to pursue it?'

We were summoned to—and joined the supper party. The remainder of the evening was taken up with several indifferent matters, just as they happened to arise in a mixed company without order or connection; and at a moderate hour we bad good-night. I repeat the same to you, my child, for it is late and I am weary.

CAROLINE.

LETTER XII.

The next evening, the weather proving extremely fine, Algernon proposed to me to take a walk in the garden, which I readily came into; and a short ramble soon brought us to a little study which my father had built for the conveniency of avoiding the interruptions of his public affairs, and enjoying a freer air, and more extended prospect, whenever the season of the year, and state of the atmosphere should invite to such a retreat.

It was here, too, that Algernon frequently amused his solitary hours, and where he generally preserved half a dozen of his favorite authors for that particular purpose.

The arrival at this charming retreat afforded me a fair occasion to remind him of the promise he had made me of renewing his last evening speculation on the Windsor Forest of Pope. 'Twas but, I told him, to give his *free* thoughts *voice* and *accent*; he would, I hoped, be under no restraint upon the account of my being present; especially as this was not the first time he had made me so much his friend, as to initiate me into those sacred mysteries of knowledge which were generally assumed to be above the capacity of my sex.

'Since you will needs condescend, amiable princess,' said he, 'to bear a part with me in these my solitary exercises, I will introduce them to you in the same manner as I told you, I first fell into them myself, by reading to you a passage out of Pope.'

He here read a part of the Windsor Forest, and then continued:

'Tis this union of nature and art that I always thought the recommendation of the English method of designing. Here is nothing of that studied regularity, which displeases by a perpetual sameness and repetition of

"Grove nods on grove, each ally has a brother,
"And half the platform just reflects the other."

'The poor result of a confined taste, and a littleness of design! But a certain agreeable wildness should prevail through the whole, which as it resembles nature in beauty, resembles it also in its use, by suiting itself to the unequal temper of the climate, and varying, with all the varieties of the sea-

sons. The disposition of "The Forest" is easy and natural, arising wholly out of the *genius of the place*; and the several beauties seem not so properly brought *into* it as resulting *from* it. The interchanges of shade and opening, level and raised grounds, garden and forest, are adjusted with great art, so as best to relieve and set off each the other; and withal to take in, or to exclude, the view of the country, as either was judged most agreeable in the general plan. And whilst the eye is taken up with the various forms of beautiful objects that present themselves in their respective assignments, the other senses are as agreeably entertained with the multiplied fragrancies of natural scents, the warbling music of birds, or the soothing softness of aquatic murmurs.

"Good heavens!" interrupted I, "what a delightful scene. I should give the world for such a forest; to pass the remainder of my life in, rambling from place to place, and there consume each day 'till evening should come upon me. Happy queen who commands such a forest! Happy Caroline, could she but wander thro' it."

Alas! how ignorant was I of what was to constitute my happiness! I have seen Windsor, and felt no pleasure:—I have wandered in her forests and was alive to every thing but delight.—But I must not anticipate. Algernon thus continued:

'Besides, I have sometimes thought, there is a sort of natural connexion between what is called a *fine taste* of the politer arts of life, and a general *politeness* of manners and *inward* character.

Women, in particular, said he, turning his eyes upon me, women of a refined imagination have usually a larger way of thinking than others. They discover a delicacy of sentiment and generosity of spirit, which less improved minds are wholly strangers to.—Being conversant in the ideas of natural beauty, order, and proportion, their tempers insensibly take a polish from the objects of their studies and contemplations. They transcribe, as it were, something of that grace and symmetry they are so fond of in external decorations into the inward frame and disposition of their own minds.'

"The VIRTUOSA," said I, "Algernon, are much obliged to you. I wish they were always careful to make good an observation so much in their favour. I am afraid the polite arts are sometimes cultivated by women, who

have no great taste of moral accomplishments."

'Then they are by no means the VIRTUOSA they would be esteemed,' returned he. 'No woman has a just claim to this character, in whom the love of beauty, order, and grace, does not prevail throughout, and influence her general conduct. For, having once established a correctness of taste and elegance of fancy in the things of outward grace and ornament, shall they be such poor and scanty thinkers, as to give it no scope in subjects of a nobler kind? Shall they be so little consistent with themselves, as to be enamoured with the harmony of sounds, and have no sense of inward numbers, the measures of action, the nicer tones of passion and sentiment?—Commanding a judicious eye in the works of painting and statuary, shall they be blind to all

the charms of moral limning, the proportions of real life and manners?—Whilst they are scrupulously exact in the disposition of the ornaments, the ordering of their houses and equipages, shall they have no regard to the living architecture of their own minds? No thought of inward embellishment? No taste of the more beautiful œconomy of the human heart,—of the order and disposition of its affections?'

'Suppose you pursue this idea! lovely princess,' said he—'suppose you look into yourself, and examine the state of your own heart. What more lovely object can you contemplate?—Tell me, is it not free from folly and from guilt, from defect and impotency—from every thing but goodness, grace and loveliness? Is it not————?'

I remained silent, confused, and agitated.

While he was yet speaking, I had, alas! looked into myself; I had examined my heart, and the nature and state of my affections, and the scrutiny filled my mind with apprehensions, astonishment, and horror!—I remained silent! So did Algernon. Whether he perceived that peace and happiness had fled from my breast, and that he himself was the cause of my confusion and misery, I know not, for he remained silent, till the pause became considerable; and then, with the most respectful tenderness, and taking me gently by the hand to raise me from my seat, he observed,

It is now too late to enter upon so large and interesting a topic. We will adjourn it, if you please, till to-morrow

evening; when, if the weather prove favourable to your walking, it may afford no unuseful matter of entertainment!

In this manner we reached the Palace, joined the party but added nothing to its pleasure or amusement.

I am for life, my dear girl, your

CAROLINE.

LETTER XIII.

As great a friend as I have ever been to fine weather and sunshine, my Charlotte, believe me I never gave it a more sincere welcome than upon looking out the next morning.

Indeed I have often been particularly pleased with the observation of an English writer, that "a fine day is a kind of sensual pleasure."—For my own part I always found it so. 'Tis then that nature unfolds all her brightest charms to view, and opens, as it were, her whole store of blessings. The inimitable beauty, extent and variety of natural prospects, the verdure of the

fields and meadows, the fragrancy of the air, the lustre, mildness, and benignity of the heavens; in a word, the whole scene of a fine day wonderfully co-operates to our enjoyment. The world seems made for our peculiar gratification; our spirits are cherished and enlivened; our imaginations warmed and entertained, our rational faculties invigorated and exercised: the whole sytem overflows, as it were, with delight and complacency. In this agreeable consciousness, how does every anxious and disquieting thought vanish! How open is the soul to every grateful, affectionate, and devout sentiment, towards the author of its happiness! With what a generous indignation does it reject every unworthy *apprehension* of so amiable and munificent a nature! How foreign the least suspi-

cion of evil from a being of such experienced bounty and beneficence.

In this manner, and with such contemplations, did I beguile this morning, and banish from my heart the confusion and horror which but so lately reigned in it.

The greater part of the day we were obliged to attend some company that came in upon us. But the interruptions of other subjects could not keep my thoughts from glancing often upon THAT which was by agreement to employ our evening's speculation. Insomuch that I was sometimes, I am afraid, less attentive to the general conversation that was carrying on at table, than I could well justify to myself in point of good-breeding and hospitality.

When the afternoon was pretty far advanced, our visitants left us.—Algernon had little more than time to give some necessary orders, in his quality of my father's aid-de-camp, to which rank he was lately appointed, before the heat of the day was worn off to invite us abroad, in one of the most delightful evenings I have ever known.

I was going to remind him of the point he had engaged to speak on, which I affected to think was "the influence of a fine taste on the inward character," when I found myself prevented by his breaking into another subject in the following manner.

'How charming, Princess Caroline! appears the whole face of nature about us. What an uniform variety in those natural landscapes! What a delightful

melody in the woods! What an agreeable verdure in the meadows! What a cooling freshness in the air! What an exquisite fragrancy in the mingled scents of shrubs and flowers! Whilst, as Milton elegantly speaks;

——————————"Gentle gales,
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Their balmy spoils."

Above all, what an inimitable scene of beauty is now offering itself to our observation in the view of yonder setting sun ennobled with all that diversity of finely painted clouds, which, as if desirous to continue his presence amongst us, retard the parting ray, and give it back again to our sight in those multiplied reflections which adorn the western horizon!

'At the same time, behold there in the east the moon's more sober light beginning to disclose itself! See her rising, as the same divine Milton has it, "in clouded majesty!" And as the strength of day-light gradually wears away, preparing to introduce the milder graces of the evening. Who can reflect on the delightful vicissitude, and not feel a secret transport springing up in his breast, the expression of a devout gratitude towards the beneficent Author of his happines.

He paused—with his eyes unassumingly bent upon me.—I was moved—but soon replied to the interesting interrogation.

"I am, indeed, entirely of your opinion, Algernon! The contemplation of nature is one of the most delightful

entertainments that the mind is capable of. Pleasures of this kind, if they have not so much of tumult in them as the sprightlier joys of the town, have much more of real satisfaction; they leave a pleasure behind when they are past; and, what is of much higher consideration, are calculated to improve, as well as to entertain our thoughts. They refine our spirits, and humanize our tempers: soften the mind into a forgetfulness of wrath, malice, and every disquieting passion; give amiable impressions of nature, mankind, and a Diety; inspire a sense of public good; an exquisite taste for humanity and private friendship: they put us in good humour with ourselves, and with the general scheme and constitution of things around us."
—I paused.

'But of all natural speculations,' resumed Algernon, 'there is none more calculated to refine and humanize the mind, to give it an enlarged and liberal sense of things, than ——— than the theory of the heart and knowledge of its affections.—This is the end, the aim, and the object of all our other studies. Have you, lovely Princess! have you made your heart a subject of your contemplation? Have you, as I observed last evening, have you looked into yourself? Do you know the character and tendency of your affections?'—

With ideas confused, an imagination disturbed, and a heart agitated, I know not what absurd reply I should have made, had not MELINA come to reproach us for our absence, and to summon us to a party formed in the great hall.

I had no enjoyment till I retired to rest, and even there a busy mind retraced the vicissitudes of the day.

CAROLINE.

LETTER XIV.

Alas! my Charlotte, the dreams of hope which beguiled your mother, as appeared from her last letter to you, soon fled, and exposed me to a state of mind that extended its baneful influence over her happiness, and made her a victim of calamity and despair.

Of the circumstances which led to a situation so lamentable, I feel it right to give you all the most minute particulars.

You must know that the badness of the weather, the multitude of company which resorted to us at that critical time, and the want of any reasonable

opportunity, interrupted my walks and conversations with Algernon; and after the lapse of a few days, produced an unaccountable coldness of the most studied nature between us.

Melina, who always betrayed the most anxious solicitude to attract his attention, had now an opportunity of engrossing the whole of his society, and I, from pique, jealousy, or resentment, affected to enjoy the adoration of the Prussian Prince L———s, at that time a visitor at my father's court.

Thus circumstanced;—one beautiful serene summer's evening, after rambling in a grove of laurels, till the lamp of night arose, and silvered the objects around me, I seated myself on the bank of a winding stream;—a weeping willow spread over me its branches: an antique tower partly in ruins, mantled in ivy,

and surrounded with yew and cypress, was the only object to be seen. But I heard the steps of strangers, and I soon perceived MELINA attended by ALGERNON, approach the tower and repose themselves on a seat which was extended between the gate and the stream.

The moon illuminated the beauteous countenance of Algernon; I could see that Melina regarded him with a gentle smile, and that a lively colour glowed upon his cheeks. I could see, alas! perhaps I only thought I saw, that he looked upon her with a fond complacency, and that he listened with rapture to all she said.

With a silent step, a mind on fire, and a heart throbbing with agony, I passed to a spot where I could remain concealed, although nearer to them than where I at first reposed.

Fatal vice! criminal curiosity! it dispelled the airy illusions which I so long and so imprudently entertained.

Notwithstanding the perversion of mind and intellect under which I existed, I could not help confessing that Melina appeared a being of the most angelic form.

A mantle of the palest sapphire hung over her shoulders to the ground; her flaxen hair fell in waving curls on her fine neck, and a white veil, nearly transparent, shaded her face;—as she lifted it up, she sighed, and continued for some moments silent: never did I behold a countenance so delicate, and notwithstanding a smile played on her coral lips, her lovely blue eyes were surcharged with tears, and resembled violets dropping with dew: beneath her veil she wore a wreath of mingled

amaranths and jessamine. Not to have admired such a being, would have betrayed a depravity of reason, and a perversion of sentiment, which would have made me worthy the pangs I then felt and since feel.

Algernon, adorned with all the charms of his enchanting youth, with eyes bent towards her, and with accents sweet as those of Milton's Eve, thus addressed her:

'Why does that sigh distend thy bosom? Why does that blush pervade thy cheek? You, who are destined to augment the felicity of some favored mortal!—You, whom the loves pursue and play around!—You, whose life exhibits a lovely scene of gentle innocence and calm repose!—You!——what can interrupt your happiness?—What can ——?'

"O never! never! dare I tell you," exclaimed Melina, "but," continued she, for Algernon remained silent and apparently petrified, "do you know the "Sorrows of Sophia Fribourgh;" do you know that she loved a being who could make no return to her love? I had been reading those "Sorrows" this morning; a melancholy tale, which in strong colours impressed itself on my memory, and led me to reflect on the change of pleasure we sometimes feel, in perusing the most tragical story. What, Algernon! can occasion it? Can the human heart delight in the misfortune of another? Forbid it Heaven!"

She then fixed her eyes on the surface of the water; the moon sported on the wave, and all nature seemed hushed to attend to the sweeter accents of Algernon.

'Consider, amiable Melina,' said he, 'if the rose has thorns, has it not a vermiel tincture and ambrosial sweetness?—If the woodbine droops, laden with the dew-drops of the morning, when the sun has exhaled them, will it not be refreshed and breathe richer fragrance? So, if a heart like yours, be touched with a story of distress, it will at the same time experience a delightful sensation; and if the tears flow, as yours do now, it can never be called a weakness.—Do not then wish to divest yourself of this genuine test of tenderness, or to desire the departure of sensibility from your breast.

'Ah! no, fair Melina,' continued he, 'still deign to let sensibility be thy attendant; still let her teach thee to sigh with the unhappy, and with the happy to rejoice! Still be sensible that the pleasure which arises from legends

of Sorrow, owes its origin to the certain knowledge, that your heart is not callous to the fine feelings, but that you have some generous joys, and generous cares beyond the generality of your sex.'

"But suppose," interrupted Melina, with a wild and frantic air, "suppose that the legend of Sophia, applies to myself, can I then discover in my own heart a single source of pleasure or enjoyment? Suppose that the admiration procured by the celebrity of A NAME, prepared the heart of Melina for more tender impressions;—suppose that every refined personal attraction served to heighten those impressions; that the struggle was too great for the virtue of inexperienced age; that from a combination of incidents, joined to a natural cast of enthusiastic disposition, such a strength of passion takes possession of my soul, as the wildest legends of ro-

mance have never exhibited—suppose all this; and suppose that THAT passion is for ALGERNON, and then dare to tell me that you can reconcile my story with my happiness, or——."

Scarcely had she pronounced these words, when she fell exhausted into the arms of Algernon.—I dropt lifeless to the ground—and on recovering, heard the loud tolling of the palace bell, and the voice of the multitude who were sent in pursuit of the lost

CAROLINE.

LETTER XV.

The beautiful and affecting manner in which Melina exposed the origin and the enthusiasm of her love, and the certainty that it met with a reciprocal or congenial return, had so malign and powerful an influence on my mind, that it generated a fever which confined me for several days to my bed, and spread a report that my life was despaired of.

When you reflect, my sweet Charlotte, that in the regions of the court, nothing was talked of but your mother: her costume; her person; her conversation; her manners, considered models of imitation and taste. That when she

took an airing in her carriage, duration appeared to cease, and the operations of nature seemed suspended, save the winds which crept in undulations around her car, and the clouds which intercepted the sun in his burning career. When you reflect, that my father made a merit of doing any thing whatever at my suggestion; that at a single word I could transform an Elysian field into a desert, and a desert into an Elysian; you will then be able to form some idea of the grief and consternation which my alarming indisposition excited throughout the land.

My father was inconsolable, and my mother watched with unceasing care over the safety of her child. In exercising this painful office, she discovered the true origin and cause of my dis order. But nature, reason, and religi-

on—all concurred to induce her to forgive me.

To soothe my mind; to faciliate my recovery, she even condescended to speak of Algernon; and instead of meanly endeavouring to diminish his merit, she increased by her praises, the splendid reputation he had already acquired. This generosity on her part encouraged me to speak my mind without restraint.

'Heaven knows!' said I, 'in all my love, it is him, and him only I seek for. I look for no dowry, no alliances by marriage! I am even insensible to the pride of my own birth, and the value of my own acquisitions. I am even insensible to my own pleasures, nor have I a will to gratify. All is absorbed in him. In the name of HIS WIFE, there is something more holy, some-

thing more imposing, than in all the fascinating titles that glitter on the crowns of Princes. But where is Algernon? Tell me, dear mother! where is Algernon? Is it true that he loves Melina? is it true that I am no more to behold the man whom I am for ever destined to adore?'

"Fear not, sweet innocence!" replied my mother, "fear not any-thing that may retard your recovery! Here is a letter from Melina, which will soon convince you, that there lives not a better man than Algernon, nor a more fortunate woman than yourself." With this she put a letter into my hand which run thus.

"I am about to impose on myself a "most painful and ungracious task— "'tis to tell you that I have violated "your friendship, and that I am un-

" worthy of your esteem. You have
" always treated me with kindness and
" attention, and I have always been
" ungrateful and indiscreet. Nay more,
" I have coolly concerted and endea-
" voured to accomplish your misery;
" to make you a wretch as desolate as
" myself, by robbing you of the affec-
" tions of the man you love!

" I have, by a calm and logical plan,
" strove to inspire your Algernon with
" the passion I myself feel;—but I
" have failed. The congeniality of
" your studies, the resemblance in
" your minds, manners, and affections
" have defeated all my designs, and
" when I audaciously and imprudently
" confided my secret to Algernon, he
" told me, but with pity it is true,—he
" told me——."

'Alas! Madam, the unfortunate Al-
'gernon already loves your friend—the
'most interesting and accomplished
'woman of the age. You have deposit-
'a secret in my breast—let the hidden
'feelings of my heart, find a sanctua-
'ry in yours—know, then, that I dare
'to love her who is the subject of ge-
'neral love and envy,—know that I
'dare to love the Princess Caroline of
'Hasburgh, and that from the first in-
'stant I beheld her, I felt that my
'misfortune or my felicity had com-
'menced its career.'

"This mutual confession, so honora-
" ble on his part, so inglorious on mine,
" was interrupted by a sudden noise in
" the vicinity of the old tower where
" we were seated: we rose—returned
" in a deadly silence to the palace, from
" which our absence had excited asto-
" nishment, and our return without

" you, surprize and despair. The bell
" was tolled aloud; every person went
" in your pursuit, and found you, faint
" and languid, near the monument of
" my humiliation—near the spot where
" Algernon heard and rejected the love
" I entertained. His affliction at the
" state you were in, and at the con-
" tinuation of your indisposition, can
" never be described:—and yet, he
" knew not the cause—he suspected
" not your passion for him, nor che-
" rished the most distant idea that you
" thought him the most lovely and ac-
" complished of men.

" Taking advantage of this timidity
" and ignorance, and fearful lest he
" should come to the knowledge of a
" circumstance on the perpetual secre-
" cy of which my last gleam of hope
" tremulated, I sought another confer-
" ence with him; I commiserated his

" fate, and told him you were unwor-
" thy of such a passion; that your in-
" dispostion was owing to a violent
" attachment existing between you
" and Prince L——s, and that you
" were at once as unworthy his love as
" his esteem! He sunk at my feet! I,
" too, was nearly in a lifeless state.
" Would, alas! that I had been life-
" less! On recovering, I found the sto-
" ry had made a deep impression on
" his heart and character. He rose
" up, viewed me more with an indig-
" nant than a suspicious eye; struck
" his forehead with one hand, while
" he wove a frozen farewell to me with
" the other, and then suddenly disap-
" peared! To pourtray the condition in
" which I remained, would be a vain
" and futile attempt. As for Algernon,
" having magnified every little advert-
" ence in your conduct into proofs of
" my accusations, or believing at least

" that he was slighted, neglected or
" despised, he applied to the Duke
" for leave of absence, and set off for
" Paris with all the appearance of a
" broken heart, and a tortured mind.
" Such is the effect of my cruel and
" criminal conduct!—What reproach-
" es do I not merit from the world,
" for dimming the lustre of the two
" brightest stars it contains! For dar-
" ing to appropriate to myself, that
" man, whom nature meant to be the
" ornament and benefactor of the hu-
" man race, or the husband of the
" sweetest woman that exists. But,
" I am not yet totally shameless. I
" cannot yet reconcile myself to you,
" but I can be useful. Send this let-
" ter to Algernon, and he will quickly
" return to reward his Caroline—and
" to pity your unfortunate MELINA."

Excuse me, my Charlotte, I must here conclude; I cannot do justice to the scene of affection, which ensued the perusal of this letter, between my mother and your own, own

CAROLINE.

LETTER XVI.

Nothing could equal,—as I trust you have judgment and sensibility to conceive, my beloved girl, my distress, my joy, and my astonishment on reading Melina's letter. How to appease her affliction, how to vindicate my conduct, and how to undeceive Algernon, were duties incumbent on me to perform, but they appeared to me to be traversed by so many obstructions, that they retarded the restoration of my health, and made me incapable of forming any well concerted design, or of following any practicable pursuit.

In this dilemma, Prince L——s, who from his infancy entertained for me a brotherly kindness and affection,

and with whom I had been brought up as a sister, determined to set off for Paris; to discover Algernon, to inform him of his error and of his happiness, and to bring him back to a society in which he was so lamented and adored.

All attempts and enquiries to discover Algernon were totally fruitless for three whole days, when the Prince being on a visit at a nobleman's seat near Versailles, walked out by himself in the grounds adjoining the house which were open to the public, and coming up to an arbour, saw in it a gentleman standing with his back towards him, whom he presently recognized to be—Algernon!

Unconscious of a witness being present, Algernon sighed, and said, "The "night-shade grows here with the ho- "ney-suckle, as the amiable accom-

" plishments of Caroline entwine with
" the errors of her mind."

" But—may I not have been too pre-
" cipitate ?" continued he, " I must re-
" turn to reason ! Every hour of my ab-
" sence makes me mistrust my own
" jealousy, as well as her truth, virtue,
" and excellency."

At these words he turned round—and startled back with a look of threat, horror, and indignation, at the sight of Prince L——s. Fortunately, however, this gallant young Prince was born with such an impress of honor on his front, that it was impossible to regard him for an instant and to retain any suspicion of the virtue and dignity of his heart. His manners, too, were as mild and unassuming, as his mind and conduct were manly and decided, and his zeal, courage, and abilities were

acknowledged and applauded both in the cabinet and in the camp.

"Unhappy Algernon," said he, "is "it necessary to conjure you to do jus "tice to your Prince? Is it necessary "to implore you to listen to me; to "bring you back from your mistake, "and to convince you that there is not "the smallest ground for the charges "which the unfortunate Melina has in- "duced you to believe?"

Algernon rapidly advanced to the proffered embrace—listened to, and examined the proofs which were adduced: the mistake was fully explained, and he was not only satisfied of my innocence, my Charlotte, but assured that he alone was the arbiter of my fate.

On their way home, this amiable Prince abruptly turned towards his friend and companion, and said:——

"Algernon, it is the duty of a friend, "to participate in painful recollec- "tions, and this plea will impose it upon "thee. Thou must recollect the happy "time when Melina, and Caroline, and "I, the ill-fated L——s, were asso- "ciated and bred as relatives together. "Couldst thou see Melina before "thee now as I do? Couldst thou hear "how sweetly, how affectionately she "speaks? Excellent divine Melina," continued he, "how dear you were "to me! You were the first and the "only object of my love! the only "spring and fountain of my felicity! "In your society the hours unthought "of slipt away! beguiled by your en- "livening influence, I passed my early "youth, nor dreamed that the source

" of my happiness could become the
" instrument of my misery !—But I shall
" tell you all—Algernon !—No, rather
" let me be silent ; for what can I speak
" to the dearest fiend of my heart but
" of the sorrow of my soul. No long-
" er bound by the sweet tie of love, I
" must be more closely cemented to
" thee by the bonds of friendship.
" Having never possessed the spirit
" and heart of Melina, I will love the
" man she loved, and cherish that
" peaceful philosophy which distin-
" guishes his character and secures the
" tranquillity of his breast. Yes, my
" friend," he continued, " for six years
" have I given Melina every pledge of
" my affection and met with no reci-
" procal return. For six years."——

Here the tears stood in his fine eyes —he could not proceed ! They soon after arrived at the palace gate, and

joy, and consternation, resumed their happy and tumultuous reign. No more, this time, no more.

CAROLINE.

LETTER XVII.

The arrival of the two friends caused so much agitation in my breast, that it was not deemed prudent for me to see them till the following day. A long, long night, therefore, my dear Charlotte, had to pass away, before I could fix my streaming eyes on my beloved and faithful Algernon.

In the course of the succeeding day he entered my anti-chamber;—he was introduced by the Duchess and attended by Prince L—s, and one or two of my own people.—Too weak to rise, I reclined on a sopha. He advanced to me, knelt, took my hand, and vainly attempted to speak. A consciousness of this imperfection, made him clasp

my hand incessantly to his lips, while he fixed looks of such anxious hope upon me as revealed every circumstance of his thoughts.

"The happiness with which my soul is subdued," said he,—but he could not continue; his powers of mind were overcome, nor could he utter another syllable.

Was it happiness, or was it misery, a stranger might have demanded? Indeed anxiety and expectation sat upon the sharp arch of every brow:—a single breath drawn might have been heard, and each person present hung on tiptoe to hear what was *expected* to be uttered.—A deadly paleness increased for a moment both on my cheek and on that of Algernon, when a glance, each half raised, and neither wholly ventured to fix on the other, enriched

our cheeks alike with a bloom, that interpreted the emotion of our minds.

I was the first to cast my eyes on the ground, and he turned his with deep intenseness on the Duchess, as though he would, through them, drag the discovery his failing speech thus painfully prolonged.

"Imagine not," said the Duchess, "imagine not Algernon, that it is to "lower your pride or wound your feel- "ings, that I now introduce you to my "daughter. No; I call upon God, "whose mercy I supplicate, to witness, "that I have always regarded you as "my son. I have no objection to your "marriage with Caroline: take her to "your arms! It shall be my duty to "reconcile you to the Duke. Be hap- "py! my son. Be happy!"

A burst of delight, even to agony, that overflowed the bosom of the youth, as he fell in a manner prostrate before his boundless benefactress, was too mighty for both.

The Duchess, when able, approached me, and said, " I soon guessed at my " girl's 'indisposition; I hope I have " found a remedy—will she now reco- " ver for her mother and friends ?"

Subdued and soul-touched, I lifted my eyes from the ground, on which terror and uncertainty had caused me to bury them, and my look made the expression of the tongue needless.

By an irresistible impulse, at the same instant, Algernon caught me in his arms, and my cheek found a sweeter resting place on his shoulder ; while the fond parent made an effort to seal,

with her blessing, those sacred, those delightful vows, each beating heart was for the first time making to the other.

"I have been aware this happy moment would come," interrupted Prince L—s. "I foresaw that I should have "my portion of delight; take this ring, "Algernon, and let me unite your "hands 'till the Duke consents to a more holy rite."

Algernon, at a hearing so blessed, sprung from his knees, as though light enough to soar up to heaven, and raising me with the most endearing tenderness, put the ring on my finger, and kissed my extended hand with the deepest rapture.

What a moment! The servants sunk in solemn silence on their knees. My mother wept upon my neck; and Prince L—s endeavoured to suppress an incurable sensibility, yet melting at his heart.

Thus a few, a very few, minutes, to the astonishment even of the immediate parties, witnessed the happiness of two lovers, who, one hour before, had never breathed a sound like impassioned tenderness, although in secret they mutually consecrated to celibacy the heart neither dared to give to the other.

Oh! how sweet were the tears of blended gratitude and delight that each poured over the generous hand of the amiable Duchess.—In natures, finely touched with the pure spirit of heaven, it is hard to discover which

feels most gratification—the obliger, or the obliged;—in my mother's eyes it added a charm, that she would not have it comprehended that she made at once the fortune and the happiness of Algernon; and he, on his part, felt it but as an added enjoyment to owe every good to her—to the mother of his beloved Caroline.

A little time stemmed in each bosom its conflux of passions, and I suddenly recollected the derangement of my dress. I cast a surprised eye on its disorder, nor did I forget the unbecoming morning cap which I wore; but glancing over the dishevelled hair, and careless attire of Algernon, I thought I had never seen him so handsome; and though woman enough to prefer propriety, I was wise enough to know that it is only consecrated by virtue.—See-

ing me relapse into weakness, my dear friends left me to repose, as I now do you my lovely Charlotte. Farewell! Love your

CAROLINE.

LETTER XVIII.

Nothing could have been more fortunate than the return of the two friends, and the consequent re-establishment of my health and gaiety; for our court had received the acquisition of several English visitors of distinction, and nothing could offend my father more than to find them treated with coldness, inattention, or incivility.

Indeed he valued that nation more than any other country, and often declared that he would prefer to see me the wife of an English Prince than the Empress of any of the richest nation of the continent of Europe.

We were peculiarly fortunate in our visitors just at this time: they were all men of travel and letters, and named—M———e, W———e, G—y, T——n, W———m, and Lords V———n and St. H——s. And that nothing might cast a gloom over a society which merited so much bliss, I restored Melina to my friendship, and insisted on Prince L—s forgetting the sorrow which preyed upon his mind:—If not cheerful, to affect to be cheerful, and to learn of my Algernon how to win a female heart.

The first time I saw these interesting Englishmen was at our tea hour—for I did not join the dinner-party, from motives of timidity which you possibly may divine. They were no sooner introduced to me in the evening than they formed a little circle distinct from the general company, and

appeared to take delight in every observation, however trivial that I made.

The conversation turned upon travelling and the passion of the English to roam abroad.

'There is a French proverb,' said I, 'which says *qu' à chaque biseau son nid est beau*,—what is the reason Mr. M————e, that you Englishmen do 'not love your homes; that you abscond from them; that you quit your 'country, and prefer to it so often the 'most sterile and inclement parts of 'the globe?—I am told there is not 'a village, or a town, in Africa, in 'Asia, or in the Crimea where an Englishman or an English family may not 'be found apparently established for 'life.'

" Princess," returned M————e,
" we all have motives of which it does
" not seem you are conscious of the
" strength. Permit me to inform you
" in a few words.

" When travelling in Egypt, I met
" V———a, who is now before you,
" in a garden watering a jessamine.
" You, my lord, said I, in Egypt! the
" rencontre is surprising. What on
" earth do you here?"

' I enjoy,' said he, ' the finest fruits,
' —and I love this little spot which I
' have myself improved, more than all
' the Baronies I possess in England
' and Ireland. Observe,' continued
his Lordship, ' observe this beautiful
' bunch of grapes; examine its pro-
' perties, its fragrance, its taste: it sur-
' passes the finest Indian fruit.—Such
' are my motives for dwelling here.'

" And for life ?" said I.

' No, unfortunately,' said V——a, ' I ' imposed an obligation *on myself*, to ' visit the Islands of the Archipelago ' and the Coast of Asia, and to return ' to my own detestable country, at ' the expiration of ten years.'

" Passing from France to Spain, at " another time," continued the entertaining M———e, " I met my friend " W———m, who is also here before " you, dwelling on the summit of one " of the bleakest Pyrennes. Good God ! " W———m," exclaimed I, " is it in " truth you ? What in the name of " wisdom, can you do upon this rock ?" He answered :

' I respire a fine air.'

" And could not you indulge in the

" same luxury on Richmond-hill?" said I.

' By no means,' said W———m, ' Richmond is a mere garden, with a ' beautiful natural amphitheatre, that is ' certain, but its varieties are embel- ' lished, and all its scenery announces ' the hand of man. For my part I love ' nature dressed by the hand of na- ' ture—in her chemise. Such as you ' observe it here, wild, naked, and gi- ' gantic !'

" Some time after," resumed M—— " when passing through Russia, I " found L—d St. H——s, who also " now basks in your Royal Highness's " presence, I found him, in the finest " season in the year, muffled up in a " sheep-skin pelice, and lying before " the fire on a buffaloe hide. My " Lord, said I, with horror, what in

" the name of goodness has brought
" you to this country, and reduced you
" to this state ?"

'I enjoy,' said his Lordship, 'the
' charms of this climate !'

" Your enjoyments," replied I,
" must be of a very gelid nature, for it
" freezes hard here, nine months in the
" year."

'It matters nothing,' retorted his Lordship, 'I did not find myself well
' in England, I solicited to come out
' ambassador to this court ; I came,
' and I consider my health much im-
' proved. Besides, in England, you
' have generally *three* seasons in *one*
' day, whereas here there is but one
' season throughout the year.'

" But, my Lord," said I, " it appears

" to me that your Lordship's nose and
" ears are frost-bitten !"

' That is but too true, M————e,'
said his Lordship, ' but believe me that
' is not the fault of the climate: 'tis
' that of my stupid valet de chambre,
' who, in one of the severest nights
' that has occurred these several
' months, forgot to envelop my head
' in the skin of a bear !'

" In making the tour of Italy, charm-
" ing Princess," said M————e, " I
" found T————n at Florence, a city
" which he inhabited for a number of
" years."

" You demand of me what he was
" doing there all that time ? I can in-
" form you—here he is present, let
" him contradict me if he can."

" In the morning he assembled some
" thirty musicians in his great hall,
" who made as much noise as our peo-
" ple at the opening of St. Bartholo-
" mew fair. At two o'clock he dined;
" at three took coffee and reposed; be-
" cause to be a true Italian, it is ne-
" cessary to sleep AFTER dinner. At
" five he rose from his couch; dressed,
" *fait su toilette*; went to the Opera;
" supped with Graciana, and at two
" returned home to bed. This is the
" history of his whole life at Florence.

" As to G—y, whom I met at Milan,
" he was detained there by a Roman
" nightingale, whose song pleased him
" so much that he promised never to
" separate from the sweet bird till the
" day of his death. I advised him to
" take the object of his admiration to
" England, but he seemed to fear that
" the voice might degenerate; and he

" assured me that G———a, had no
" sooner passed the streights of Dover,
" than she ceased to be G———a, and
" appeared to him as contemptible as
" any native of the isle.

" But I have forgot W———e," continued the facetious M———e. " His memoirs are, however, short. " They consist in his having spent " thirty thousand hard guineas in the " purchase of old copper coins to the " intrinsic value of about ten pounds, " and in forming a collection of shells, " pebbles, grubs, and butterflies, which " his next heir will pitch into the " streets.

" Thus have I obeyed the commands " of your serene Highness," concluded M———e.

'Not so perfectly as you understand, 'Mr. M———e, said I; 'you have 'not accounted for your own peregri- 'nations; it appears to me that your 'own motives for absenting yourself 'from your country, must be peculiar- 'ly interesting and strong. I must in- 'sist, as you have been so exact with 'these gentlemen,—upon knowing the '*origin* of your motives for rambling 'about the world, and for living in a 'manner that must obstruct your rise 'to glory and to fame. I must insist 'on knowing the origin.'

I had hardly repeated the word "origin," when M———e rose from his seat, with an air sorrowful and perturbed; and, taking the proffered arm of his friend G—y, made me a respectful inclination of his head and retired!

I was affected and confused; the charm of our little circle was dissolved. The strangers gathered round my father; and Prince L——s, and Algernon conducted Melina and me to that part of the company which my mother entertained. During this ceremony, I understood from Algernon, that I had touched a chord that always vibrated discord in poor M———e's breast. I will tell you his "Sorrows," to-morrow, continued Algernon.—Till then I was condemned to wait.

Adieu, dear girl.

CAROLINE.

LETTER XIX.

The day after the *conservazionée*, which terminated in a manner so unexpectedly affecting, we were compelled to consume in ceremony and public attentions; and it became nearly night before Prince L——s, Melina, Algergernon, and myself, could assemble at the old tower to hear the promised "Sorrows" of the interesting M——e.

The night was delightful. The wide expanse of Heaven was strewed with glittering stars. The moon shone softly through the dark shades of the forest. The country round was still and gloomy. All nature seemed hushed in repose, except some sparkles of the torch of

night, which played on the purling stream, and here and there a glow-worm wandering in the dark. All other lights were out; all other noise was extinct: with a sweet melancholy we seated ourselves; and forgot, in the griefs of another, the agony which the same spot had seen and experienced by ourselves. Algernon proceeded thus—

" Before I speak of M———e, I " must inform you of some particulars " of the House of Edinburgh.

" By an absurd law, a law made in " violation of the great charter, which " expressly secures to every subject the " uncontrouled right of disposing of " his person and property, the sons " and daughters of the House of Edin- " burgh, are condemned to celibacy, " or else to marry any FOREIGN PRO- " TESTANT PRINCE or PRINCESS, that

" may be deemed, *after proposals*, an
" eligible match.

" In consequence of this law, the
" sons waste the vigour of their mind
" in the lap of enervating enjoyments;
" and at a time when they ought to be
" married men, philosophers, states-
" men and warriors, they are found
" with the reins loosened at the call of
" passion; and instead of rising in the
" scale of excellence, they are com-
" pelled to sink in vicious depravity
" below their fellow-citizens; who are
" secured from the subjugation of cri-
" minal pursuits, by the domestic so-
" ciety of British wives, who are a
" pattern of virtue, of honor, and of
" truth.

" Strangers to the tenderness of con-
" jugal love, the sons waste their affec-
" tions in the embraces of harlots;—

" or, if they enter into a political marri-
" age, their condition is more miserable
" than what can well be conceived.

" Without knowing the temper,
" manners and character of those with
" whom they engage, they enjoy no
" satisfaction ; soothe or share no cares,
" and must aggravate and augment
" mutual defects and infirmities.

" They cast their eyes upon their
" situation, and contrast the freedom
" they enjoyed in the company of
" prostitutes, with the tyranny impo-
" sed upon them by political wives, in
" whom, their hearts have no manner
" of interest or concern.

" If such be the case of the sons of
" the House of Edinburgh, the fate of
" its daughters is infinitely less capable
" to be endured.

" Perpetually secluded from marri-
" age with their countrymen, however
" nobly and highly descended, and
" condemned to consume their life in
" hopes of some beggarly protestant
" Prince applying for their hand, they
" are placed on a tottering eminence,
" exposed to a multitude of watchful
" and scrutinizing eyes.

" There is nothing they perform that
" is not known, and the notorious sub-
" ject of conversation. Their amuse-
" ments are examined with an atten-
" tion which themselves do not think
" they deserve. Their foibles are mag-
" nified through a thousand censorious
" glasses, and their smallest levities
" considered as the utmost stretch of
" human crime.

" An insuperable line of separation
" is drawn between them and the no-

" bility and gentry of their native
" land.

" They are immured in castles. No
" man, but the invalids and servants
" of the state, can enter those castles;
" no one must behold their faces, but
" at church or at court.

" An inevitable death or perpetual
" imprisonment, awaits the man who
" shall attempt to intrude himself into
" their apartments, or address a few
" words to them on meeting them out
" of doors.

" And the smallest instances of
" their affability, partiality, or kind-
" ness,—such as a smile, a nod, the
" return of a bow, or the extension of
" the hand for an embrace, are inter-
" preted into the *signs* of a passion,
" which, if not checked, would infuse

" the dreadful contagion of love over
" the regions of the imagination and
" the heart.

" And for whom are so many charms
" carefully preserved? Not for a R——l,
" a H——d, a C———h, or a P——y.
" No, but for some foreign Prince, too
" poor to marry at home, and yet too
" great to be rejected abroad.

" Were MONACO a protestant, or
" were the Italian Princes not of the
" Catholic faith, there is not a daugh-
" ter of this illustrious House, but
" what would at this day, have been
" a slave to a contemptible little tyrant
" of some Italian state!

" Not but those amiable daughters
" have no disposition to burst asunder
" their unnatural chains! And when
" we reflect on their want of a liberal

" education; in the idleness and abun-
" dance in which they pass their days;
" the restraint in which they are unre-
" mittingly kept; and *the vivacity of*
" *passion excited by restraint*, it is mat-
" ter of astonishment how they sup-
" press the fire of the heart, and how
" they check the approach of love,
" tenderness, and sentiment!

" The truth is, nature, whose pow-
" erful voice the law of this House
" vainly attempts to smother and sub-
" due, mingles in all their pains and
" their pleasures; rouses their sensa-
" tions; and directs their vivid ima-
" ginations, their desires, their medi-
" tations—but, unfortunately towards
" objects which that law denies them
" liberty to attain.

" The ardour, however, pursues
" them: the law, in the place of ex-

" tinguishing, contributes to the con-
" flagration, and drives its victims
" sometimes to degrading—sometimes
" to the most honorable attachments.

" Of the latter distinguished kind,
" is the passion of Lady E———
" for the unfortunate M——!"

Algernon had no sooner stated this interesting and unexpected fact, than we all expressed our astonishment and admiration—but being late, were compelled to adjourn till the morrow. Farewell

CAROLINE.

LETTER XX.

We were all so impatient to hear the continuation of the "Sorrows" of M————e and the amour of Lady E———, that we adjourned immediately after breakfast, on the day succeeding the first recital, to my study, and there heard Algernon deliver himself as follows:

"The fair E——— to the quickest "improvements of the mind, adds "the lustre of a very beautiful counte- "nance, and the fascination of a per- "son amiably formed.

"Her most remarkable charm, how- "ever, is her countenance; but it is "well known that nature has made

" this a characteristic sign of the House
" of Edinburgh, and that there is not
" a family in Europe who has so con-
" spicuous a testimony of an honest
" heart and upright mind.

" As to the form of Lady E———,
" without being thin and taper, it is
" limber and elegant; elastic and well
" contoured: and those attractive pro-
" perties, added to the softness and
" fairness of her skin; to the freshness
" of her complexion, and the carnation
" of her frame, render her one of the
" most interesting women of the age.

" She has also the happiest turn for
" music, drawing, poetry, and the fine
" arts, and a peculiar talent for conver-
" sation, mirth and humour. Yet,
" notwithstanding her courtesy, affa-
" bility of deportment, condescension
" to men of letters, and fondness for

" social intercourse, she has a due re-
" gard for her station, and seldom for-
" gets she is nobly born.

" In the pride of birth, however, she
" sees nothing but what leads to dig-
" nified conduct, and to honorable ac-
" tions. And in the pride of wealth
" and title, she sees nothing but what
" naturally leads to the high power and
" distinction of diffusing blessings
" throughout the land.

" She rejected, with becoming dis-
" dain, several ' poor foreign protestant
" Princes;' and at an age, yet young,
" seemed determined to pass her life
" in ' single blessedness.'

" Her heart was, notwithstanding,
" truly susceptible, and was much af-
" fected by the constant assiduities of
" M———e, who long strove to catch

" her every thought, and to prevent her
" every wish.

" Gratitude inclined her heart to
" love, and she almost breathed
" a wish, to a female friend of
" M——'s, an attendant on his mother
" the Duchess of Edinburgh, that she
" might converse with the generous
" youth to whom she owed so many
" and so faithful attentions.

" Instantly the elegant M———e,
" blooming as an Adonis, and clothed
" in the dress of the guards, knelt be-
" fore her.

" She deigned to present him her
" hand; he pressed it to his lips; de-
" scribed to her the purity of his pas-
" sion, and earnestly prest for an ac-
" knowledgment of love, and a pro-
" mise of fidelity and secrecy.

" The mind of the fair E———, " was delicacy itself; and a sentiment- " al lover just suited the ideas which " she had formed; she gave her assent " to M———e's prayer; and bound " herself to eternal silence as to the " connexion; to listen to no foreign " treaty of marriage, and to attend to " no other object than the captivating " being who lay at her feet and ex- " ulted in his success.

" For some time every scene was " a scene of virtuous happiness. Par- " ticipating in the amiability of her " lover, she extended her natural be- " nevolence to all around her. But " this gay vision lasted not long. At " the usual place and hour M———e " repaired to the subject of his adora- " tion.

" All was silence and gloom! With
" secret dread and uneasiness, for the
" reputation of his E———, he travers-
" ed several times the *usual* hall. He
" heard sounds, but they sunk again
" into the distant air, and all became
" silent as before.

" In a short time, however, the
" hall was filled with light and arms.
" Fear and wonder possessed all the
" faculties of M———e, and he felt
" as in the presence of visitants from
" hell.

" A chilling thrill stole thro' every
" vein, and his resolution for a mo-
" ment gave place to mingled surprize
" and terror; but quickly shaking off
" this weakness of human nature, he
" remembered that he was a soldier,
" and in that remembrance was quick-
" ly all himself. He grasped his drawn

" sword—and defended himself from
" the attack of those who were ordered
" to seize, and to bring him into the
" presence of the Duke of Edinburgh.

" He was wounded; dizziness seized
" on him, and he was carried without
" resistance before the awful tribunal
" of the father of E———.

" The wretched E——— who com-
" prehended all the horror of his fate,
" and who dreaded his life might be
" in danger, gathered courage from de-
" spair; she rushed out of her apart-
" ment, and entered the hall where
" M———e was detained.

" A piercing shriek announced her
" knowledge of his wounds: she fell
" prostrate on the ground.

" The agonies of a parent, the terrors
" of the spectators, cannot be de-
" scribed!

" The amiable father sunk beneath
" this load of distress. He strove to
" recover his daughter; promised her
" his blessing and forgiveness, and only
" required of M———e, that he
" should travel on the continent during
" the term of six years.

" Unfortunate lovers! eternally se-
" parated for a breach of decorum; for
" you are not to understand that their
" intercourse was polluted by licentious
" pleasures, or by a low sensuality of
" any kind—their interviews were dis-
" covered, and it was judged that pre-
" vention was a virtue not to be de-
" spised.

" Nor is this the only victim in that
" illustrious house. The heir to the
" house," continued Algernon, " the
" most amiable and accomplished no-
" bleman in Europe, is compelled to
" marry some foreign Princess, and to
" violate the sacred engagements he
" has sometime since formed with a
" gentlewoman of considerable beauty,
" merit and worth."

' How! compelled?' interrupted Prince L—s, with some degree of impatience and indignation.'

" Why," resumed his friend, " the
" heir of the House of Edinburgh, is a
" man of feeling and honor—he owes to
" his tradesmen the sum of £500,000;
" and his father refuses to discharge that
" enormous debt, without the son will
" consent to marry; and by such means
" live with more regularity, and at the

" same time secure an uninterrupted
" progressive line of descent to the
" house.

" Honor, as I have observed, sways
" this young nobleman; he has given
" a reluctant consent to this tyrannic
" proposition, and all the indulgence
" he could obtain of his father was, to
" send his own agent to the protestant
" courts, and to marry the Princess,
" of whom his commissioner should
" make the most favorable report.

" The commissioner is now in Ger-
" many, he has forwarded some por-
" traits home, and I understand from
" the English resident here, that he is
" expected by your father to-morrow,
" lovely Caroline," concluded Algernon, fixing his eyes in a pensive manner upon me.

Thus ended, my sweet Charlotte, the narration of Algernon. He had no sooner finished, than we all rose up; regarded each other with looks more of apprehension than of pleasure; could not, or durst not expose our individual sensations, and so separated to dress for a dinner party, to which all the English travellers were invited.

That nothing may traverse your happiness, is the prayer of your afflicted

CAROLINE.

LETTER XXI.

It is said, my dear Charlotte, that suspicion is the beginning of wisdom, because it puts us on an enquiry into the truth of any proposition suggested to us. I am more inclined to think that the axiom would have been more just, had it said, that suspicion is the beginning of calamity: for I no sooner heard of the intention of the commissioner, mentioned in my last visit to my father's court, than I *suspected* some design upon my peace; some interruption to my felicity.

To dissipate the baneful influence of gloomy anticipations, and to conceal the perturbation of my mind from a numerous and scrutinizing society, I

declined attending the dinner party, and took a solitary ramble in my favorite grove.

Perhaps of all natural speculations there is none more calculated to refine and tranquillize the mind; to give a generous and liberal sense of things, than a walk in a field, forest, or garden. In my opinion it is the most natural foundation of improvement and pleasure. And a woman must have lost her very senses, and become a piece of uninformed machanism, before she can behold the chearful face of nature with coldnesss and indifferency. For my part, no sooner do I take a walk, but numberless gay scenes immediately display themselves to my view; the various forms, the arrangements, the colorings of surrounding objects, instantly strike my attention; and all nature appears to me, as was said by the

author of it, "in perfect beauty." I am entertained with grateful sounds in the natural music of birds, the fannings of woods, the murmur of streams, or the fall of waters.

In spite of the most sullen melancholy, which would deprive me of the innocent delights of my being; I unavoidably am refreshed with cooling breezes and delicious odours. The benefits of light and sunshine, healthful air, and kindly seasons, force many sensible sensations upon me, whether I will or not; and by a merciful violence often constrain me to be happy.

So largely has an all-bountiful Creator provided for my happiness, that no efforts of morose and peevish calamity can intirely overrule the benevolent constitution of my nature; and the most ingenious artificers of my misery

must be unavoidably disappointed after the publication of this letter.

I may imagine, from hence, my lovely Charlotte, that the kind Author of the universe, for seeing what uncouth pains some vicious spirits would take to bring misery upon me, has, in pity to my anticipated sufferings, constituted almost every thing about me as a necessary source of pleasure, and as a counterbalance to the perverseness of my enemies. But I cannot here conclude this interesting subject. In truth, I have hitherto only dwelt on its surface. Let us, my sweet child, descend a little more into the philosophy of those several delightful perceptions which nature so liberally administers to us, and we shall discover a more exquisite apparatus in the œconomy of our sensible pleasures than is generally, I believe, apprehended.

There is no one of our senses that affords us so large a variety of pleasing ideas as our sight. It is to this we are indebted for all that abundant profusion of natural beauty, that adorns the whole visible creation. Now what are the several colorings of outward objects, and those magnificent shews and apparitions, that on all hands present themselves to our view; those lights and shades of nature's pencil, that so delightfully diversify the general face of the universe? What, I say, are they, my daughter, but a set of arbitrary modifications of the perceiving mind, to which the several objects themselves have not the least resemblance? For, what agreement is there in the nature of the thing between a certain particular bulk, figure, or motion of the insensible parts of external matter, the only real qualities of the several visible bodies that so variously

entertain our sight, and our ideas of light and colours? And yet what a joyless and uncomfortable figure would these things make to us, if we saw them in their naked and philosophic realities! What a large field of pleasure and admiration would be lost to us, were all the masterly touches of natural painting, the variegated scenery of heaven and earth, at once to disappear, and one undistinguished blot to overspread the universal system!

To what purpose then such a prodigal expence of art and ornament in the furniture of this stupendous theatre of nature, but to charm the ravished sense of the intended spectator, by the prospect of these imaginary glories! My child! we may pursue this speculation yet farther. The perceptions of our taste and smell, the ideas of sounds from which are derived all the enchant-

ing powers of harmony; an entertainment which some have thought worthy of heaven itself; the sensation of heat and cold, and divers other affections of our touch, are quite other things in our minds from what they are in the several existing objects. Providence, as if the real qualities of bodies were too scanty a foundation of pleasure to the human sense, has superadded to them many imaginary properties and powers of affecting us, in order to enlarge the sphere of our blessings, and in a more eminent degree to endear to us the munificent Author of our being.

It is also observable that some of the greatest beauties of nature are at the same time the greatest benefits of it. Fruits, which are most agreeable to the eye, are often the pleasantest to the taste likewise. There is nothing that affords a greater supply of comforts to

human life than the improvements of agriculture ; and at the same time there is not a finer piece of landscape than the view of a fertile country richly diversified with the several products of natural grain: whose undulations add novelty to their charms, and entertain us no less with the variety of the scene, than with its inimitable beauty and magnificence.—And yet so careful has the great Disposer of all things been, that no part of his works should pass unrecommended, to us, that even the seeming wildnesses and imperfections of nature; as marshes, deserts, rocks, precipices, are not without their charms; they, too, entertain us with their novelty . d magnificence—if not with their beauty. And moreover, my child, they may be considered as foils to the more graceful parts; or as discords happily interspersed in the composition of things, to render the gene-

ral harmony of nature more exquisite and inchanting.

I may add that not only irregularities and seeming imperfections, but even horrors themselves, when reason or experience has removed the first impressions of our fear, are no small foundation of pleasure to us:—As fire, ruins, hurricanes, a stormy sky, a tempestuous ocean, a wild beast in chains, or a dead monster: either from the natural magnificence, or novelty of the objects that excite them, as in the last subject; or from the agreeable contemplation of our own personal safety; whilst they are considered by us as at once dreadful and harmless.

What an amiable scene of things, do such reflections open to our view! The seeming deviations of nature appear from them not only few and extraordi-

nary, but gratifying to our taste of novelty, which confers on them a sort of relative agreeableness.—But I must take leave of you for the present, with a promise of continuing a report of my farther meditations, if you shall think it worth your while to require it of me. I have established a good general foundation to proceed upon, and only reserve the interesting discussion to our future leisure or inclination.

Having consumed much time in my speculative walk, and finding the evening advanced, I hastened home to receive the dinner party in the drawing-room. In my next you shall know the interesting result.

CAROLINE.

LETTER XXII.

I RETURNED, my dear maid, both in time and in disposition to prepare for the reception of my father's friends, and to surprise them with a little concert in which I resolved to take a principal part. Indeed I always thought music one of the first accomplishments, and to those who have a good ear, it is certainly a most delightful amusement. Its efficacy to soften the manners, to melt the heart, to excite and controul the passions, is truly astonishing. It sooths the anguish of the mind, it removes the pain of the body; and puts life and motion into the whole inanimate creation.

I was joined by Melina, whom I requested to accompany me on the harp. I made this choice from a conviction that genuine music consists of only two parts—melody and harmony. The first arising from a combination of tone and modulation, and can only be applied with strict propriety to the pedal harp and to vocal music. All other instruments of music can have no claim to this distinction. Wind instruments may be supposed to approach nearer to it; but something is still wanting to compleat the idea of melody. Harmony, therefore, in my opinion is the co-incidence of two sounds, and those sounds result more from a well-strung harp, accompanied by a melodious voice, than from any other combination with which I am acquainted.

It being an English party it was late before the company adjourned to the

drawing room. On entering the apartment the band struck up "God save the King," and during the ceremony of tea-taking, it played "Rule Britannia," and several other popular British airs. —On the conclusion of this *etiquette* portion of the entertainment, the gentlemen gathered round me and Melina, and solicited us to have the goodness to touch the harp and to indulge them with a few German airs. We complied, and were in the midst of "Del Rosa," or Life let us Cherish, when Algernon, who had been on duty, entered the room—and on hearing us he exclaimed——

"Hark! to the music of the trembling sphere!
"What nightingales do sing in consort here?"

However affected we were by this tender and elegant exclamation, we

continued with renovated powers, and he again broke forth——

" Hark! how they shake the palsi'd element—
" And swell the note, as if 'twou'd ne'er be spent.
" To hear such melting echo softly move,
" Narcissus like! who would not die in love?"

Here an expression of rapturous admiration burst from every tongue, and every eye was turned upon the inspired Algernon.—Perceiving our silence, he again exclaimed——

" Sing on sweet chauntress', souls of melody!
" Closely attentive to your harmony,
" The heav'ns check and stop their pond'rous spheres,
" And all the world is now attentive ears!"

" Sing on!"———but here he was again interrupted by the general voice

of astonishment and applause—Mr. T———n taking him by the hand, and declaring aloud that the few lines he just heard were the finest specimen of the *Improvisatori* he had ever heard or enjoyed. But Algernon got himself into a difficulty from which he would fain escape. We all insisted on his singing and performing on the Harp. Covered with blushes, and sinking under the sweetest confusion, he took my seat and performed the following little sonnet, which, from the expressive looks he gave me, I could comprehend addressed to the spot where he first heard me sing.

"Fortunate vale, exulting hill, dear plain,
" Where morn and eve, my soul's fair idol stray'd,
" While all your winds that murmur'd thro' the glade

" Stole her sweet breath,—yet, yet, your paths retain
" Prints of her step, by fount whose floods remain,
" In depth unfathom'd, 'mid the rocks that shade,
" With cavern'd arch, their sleep !—Ye streams that play'd
" Around her limbs in summer's ardent reign,
" The soft resplendence of those azure eyes
" Ting'd ye with living light ! The envied claim
" These blest distinctions give, my harp, my sighs,
" My songs record ; and from their poets flame
" Bid thy wild vale, its rocks, and streams arise,
" Associates still of their bright mistress' fame."

He no sooner ceased, my dear Charlotte, than every one present was anxious to express to him their delight and approbation of his performance; and if I did not utter my sentiments publicly, I was charmed to hear from others, that he was a man who could be admired and imitated, but excelled

—perhaps equalled by none. For there is not only an inexpressible charm in the volume of his voice, but a delicacy of expression and sentiment which is the peculiar excellence of an elegant mind, and which induced Mr. M——e to declare—Algernon is in truth the genuine offspring of the Irish bard."—"In harmony," continued M——, "he may vie with Braham, and in ten-"derness of expression with Incledon: "his modulations are peculiarly sweet. "His words are also intelligible, which "gives his singing an air of novelty tru-"ly captivating."

In short, my love, if an improved imitation of the best singers, and an original poetic genius, afford pleasure, the singing of Algernon is fitted to yield it in the highest degree; and the more so, as he is no less calculated to be the delight of the humble, than of those that

are posssssed of taste, genius, instruction and discernment.

On hearing him, the imagination is at once strongly affected with the emotions of novelty, beauty, and grace; and the height of emotion, love, and sentiment are rendered visible through the media of a lovely countenance, captivating language, and harmonic sounds. He is in truth " the genuine offspring of the Irish bard."

Soon after this charming and novel exhibition we retired to supper and then to repose—to which latter blessing my Charlotte is recommended by her

CAROLINE.

LETTER XXIII.

The departure of our interesting travellers, and the non-arrival of the expected visitor from England, left me at liberty, the day after the concert, to enjoy myself in solitude and to renew my evening walks with the beloved and accomplished Algernon.

When we first entered the garden we remained some time silent. At length he addressed me with all his usual flow of eloquence and sentiment.

" How fortunate for you, my Caro-
" line," said he, " that you have a re-
" lish for the beauties of nature; that
" you can converse as it were with the

" Diety in its kindest and most engag-
" ing appearance; not so much in the
" majesty of omnipotence, as in the
" mildness of love and benignity. In
" this happy frame of mind believe me
" you possess advantages seldom ac-
" corded to the inhabitants of courts.
" You enjoy a much larger share of in-
" nocent pleasures than lie within their
" compass. You have satisfactions of
" a more exquisite kind than they ever
" experience or feel. You look upon
" the world, as it were in another
" light, and you discover in it a multi-
" tude of charms, that conceal them-
" selves from the idle, the voluptuous,
" and the dissipated.—But how must
" the pleasure grow upon you, when,
" borrowing helps from an improved
" philosophy, you consider the glories
" you survey, not as confined to this
" little globe of earth, but that a scene
" of the same kind may probably be

" presenting itself to some or other of
" the rational inhabitants of those num-
" berless worlds which lie diffused in
" the wide expanses of æther, and be
" entertaining the curious spectator of
" nature in regions of so immense a dis-
" tance from our own, that the imagi-
" nation turns giddy at the very thought
" of it!—For who shall presume to set
" bounds to the productions of infinite
" Power actuated by infinite benevo-
" lence?—Who shall circumscribe the
" theatre upon which an Omnipotent
" Goodness may think proper to display
" itself?

" Questionless those sparkling fires
" which are preparing to roll over our
" heads have a nobler use than barely
" to spangle our particular hemisphere;
" a benefit, too, which every passing
" cloud can deprive us of!—How much
" more rational is it to consider them

" as the several suns of different sy-
" stems of planets, dispensing to them
" the invaluable blessings of light, and
" heat, and refreshing influences, and
" affording them the grateful returns of
" day and night, whose mutual inter-
" changes may contribute as they do
" with us—to relieve and recommend
" each other.

" What a delightful and entertaining
" scene," continued he, " is even now
" displaying itself to our observation, in
" this spacious canopy of Heaven, en-
" riched with an infinity of shining orbs
" that shed their benign influences upon
" our heads, and make this evening so
" auspicious to us, my Caroline !"

' How auspicious, my Algernon ?' said I, for he paused, and pressed my hand in his, and appeared to look for a reply.

"Auspicious," resumed he, "to "many pleasing perceptions of the hu- "man sense, and to others of a more "elegant kind that arise out of these, "and open a still wider field of enter- "tainment; the pleasures, I mean, of "the fancy or imagination. Under this, "my amiable Caroline, I comprehend "those social delightful perceptions "which arise in my mind when I con- "template the heavenly bodies, or "when I contemplate your lovely "countenance, which is equally beauti- "ful, regular and harmonious.

"When I behold them, or when I "look upon you, how enlarged and "sublime an idea does the prospect "give me of the beneficent contrivance "of the author of my faculties, that "receive an equal pleasure from ob- "jects of contrasted character and ex-

" cellence, and think of Heaven as I
" think of you !"

' This is a mere prejudice of your
' imagination,' said I, ' Algernon, with
' an emotion not in my power to con-
' ceal.

" By no means, my Caroline," re-
turned he, with more than ordinary viva-
city, " Nature has given me a very high
" relish for her studies, and particularly
" for the heightened ornaments and au-
" gust grandeurs of the skies, but she
" required not that my admiration of
" ' the splendid host of Heaven,' should
" make me shrink from human excel-
" lence, or insensible to the dominion
" of your charms.

" On the contrary, she has filled my
" heart with a conviction that virtuous
" love can alone constitue human hap-

" piness, and that the marriage state is
" an institution which draws us no less
" forcibly by the charm of the highest
" *moral*, than *sensible* pleasures; and
" this no doubt to counterbalance some
" unavoidable inconveniences of mar-
" riage; to soften the pangs of child-
" birth; to sweeten the fatigues of do-
" mestic concerns, of the care of off-
" spring, of the education and settle-
" ment of a family, and to be the foun-
" dation and cement of those number-
" less tender sympathies, mutual en-
" dearments, and reciprocations of love
" between the married parties them-
" selves, which make up not the *mo-*
" *rality* only, but even the chief happi-
" ness of conjugal life; and at the envy
" of which, in so remarkable an exem-
" plification of it, as the condition of
" the first parents of mankind is repre-
" sented to have been by the tender
" and passionate Milton, 'tis no won-

" der their great enemy should turn a-
" side from beholding their mutual ca-
" resses, as unable to endure the pain
" of his malicious resentment at such
" superior delicacy of enjoyment."

——' Aside the Devil turn'd
For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
Ey'd them askance————'

" An image of such exquisite force
" and beauty this," continued Alger-
" non, " that the fondest lovers of an-
" tiquity may be challenged to produce
" its parallel in the most approved wri-
" ters of any age or country.

" But"—exclaimed he with enthu-
siasm, " although the image may not
" have a written parallel, it may have
" a strong likeness or a just imita-
" tion. What says my Caroline!—
" when she confers on her Algernon a
" tender sense of the more improved

" felicities of wedded love, will not " the image of Milton be realized ? will " not envy turn askance ? will not our " state be the perpetual fountain of " domestic sweets ? of purity, peace, " and innocence ?"

I could make no reply. We had reached our accustomed seat ; my head reposed on his shoulder, and my hand was held to his breast.

" Caroline," said he, " the moon has " risen from behind those dusky moun- " tains ; her resplendent light shines " thro' the trees which crown their " tops. What a charm this scene in- " spires ! Here let us rest awhile."

' This sweet place inchants me too,' interrupted I. ' The softness of the ' evening is delicious. Algernon, we ' will rest here awhile.'

" How fresh and flourishing are all
" things around us," added he, " whe-
" ther they creep upon the ground, or
" climb this ruin's sides.—There pours
" the crystal spring, which falling from
" the summit of the rock, murmurs
" thro' the garden's shades. Observe
" the point of yon rock over the cas-
" cade, there I have engraven the name
" of Caroline! She will one day visit
" that rock, enjoy this testimony of her
" lover's sentiments, and be enraptured
" with the prospect of this wide land-
" scape."

' You praise with transport,' said I,
' Algernon. But I will believe that all
' that I shall see there will be charm-
' ing. I will believe that it is the most
' delightful spot in the world. I am
' sure there is no fountain whose mur-
' murs are so sweet, whose water is so
' refreshing.'

"And this rose," returned he, "which I have plucked for you, let it "receive additional fragrance from your "breath. Let me place it in your "bosom; it will become more delici- "ous. But your bosom heaves. Ah! "why would you suppress that sigh? "Why———?"

'O come, let us begone,' I exclaimed.

"So soon?" interrupted Algernon. "So soon? Has this place no delights "for my Caroline? Can she not be "happy for an instant with her Alger- "non?"

'Ah! let us begone,' I again reiterated.—He was silent and pensive. He did not reproach me, but he sighed. My hand trembled in his.

" Oh thou serene and silver moon," exclaimed he, " be witness to my sighs; " and you peaceful groves, how often " have you sighed, after me, the name " of Caroline ! Tender flowers, which " now breathe your fragrance around " her ! the dew of evening often glitter- " ed on your leaves, while my cheek " was bathed with the tears of love and " affection ! You now hang your mourn- " ful head ! The morning saw you bloom " in all your splendour—you are now " withered. Thus my youthful days " must perish, if Caroline should dis- " dain my love ! But," said he, turning his eyes intensely upon, and addressing himself immediately to me; " when I perish, mayst thou then, sur- " rounded with all earthly bliss, enjoy " the most enchanting pleasures in the " arms of a more amiable—a more " happy lover !"

'No!—distracting thought,' cried I, —'no: never. Why, do you thus tor-'ment my soul? Have I not given you 'every bond of hope? Do I not smile 'upon you? When I sing and play on 'the harp in your presence, do you not 'see that my lips tremble, and that my 'fingers run wildly over the neglected 'wire!

"Then I still behold some glimmer-" ing rays of hope," uttered he with an expression of joy and exultation. "Caroline loves her Algernon." Her "tremulating hand is in mine! She re-"clines her head upon my breast! "—Come, let my kisses catch the tears "of love which glisten on her cheeks!"

I rose up with precipitation; his air was timid, but mine was agitated and perturbed.—I durst no longer remain!

Confused, silent, and supported by his arm, I reached the palace, retired to my chamber, and there abandoned my mind to all the delightful reveries of the most pure and exalted love. Nor can I now interrupt the delightful reflections, by adding further to this long Letter from your

CAROLINE.

LETTER XXIV.

The evening described in my last was followed by a night of horror and perturbation! The image of Algernon was perpetually before my eyes in a bleeding and prostrate condition, but I could neither raise him from the ground, nor dare to tell him how much I loved him. Sometimes I thought I heard his faltering voice, his stifled sighs, and sometimes I seemed to gaze upon his downcast look, and upon his frame which appeared faint and trembling!

The morning no sooner dawned than I repaired to the garden—the late scene of such tender and innocent felicities. But its influence was fled. There was no Algernon; it was not cheered with

the sunshine of his presence; his beams were wanting to give it lustre and warmth.

'Ye charming flowers, ye various 'plants,' said I, 'that have ever been 'my dear delight, and the object of my 'Algernon's care; deprived of his culture, as the prophecy of dreams tell 'me ye soon must be, you will wither, 'for joy shall be for ever banished from 'this place, and from my heart! Choaked will you be with weeds, while the 'thorn and briar hang over you their 'fatal shade; and you, young trees, 'planted by his hands, you that bear 'such delicious fruits, despoiled of all 'your gay attire, in his absence, your 'withered branches mournfully shall 'rise over this savage place, while I 'shall pass the remainder of my days 'in sorrow, sighs, and tears.'

This train of melancholy reflections was interrupted by Melina and Prince L——s, who came in search of me to join our family party, who were assembling for breakfast.

Algernon was absent; my father looked occupied; my mother had the appearance of having been in tears, and it appeared to me that every eye regarded me with an unusual expression of tenderness and sentiment. The painful and gloomy repast being over, my father rose, and in words of awful and portentous solemnity desired to converse with me in his closet. More dead than alive, I complied with a mechanical—not a voluntary obedience.

On entering his study, his look assumed that warlike spirit for which he was so eminent; and the affections of a father appeared totally extinguished!

Martial ardour, or the genius of ambition seemed to occupy his whole soul, and to stifle all the amiable affections of his nature.

" Caroline," said he, " attend! I was " once ranked amongst the great gene- " rals of modern times, and my sole " ambition was, and is to be placed on " a parallel with Eugine, Malborough, " the Great Frederick of Prussia, or " his cautious and able adversary Count " Daun. But a series of disappoint- " ments on my part, and of successes " on that of the French, obtain for " them the character of great generals, " and sink me in the opinion of man- " kind.

" In this opinion of the French, the " world is mistaken:—arms are a very " inferior means of their conquest; the " baneful principles of Jacobinism, the

" cruel system of forced contribution,
" proscription and confiscation, and
" also that insinuating accommodation
" to popular prejudices in religion and
" polity, so notoriously manifested in
" all their declarations and proceedings,
" having principally concurred to my
" defeat, and to putting them in pos-
" session of many countries, where the
" credulity, want of energy, or treach-
" ery of the natives have made them
" false to their own interests, and they
" have all in turn felt, too late, the
" hand of oppression, when the means
" of self-defence have become either
" desperate or impracticable.

" Fatigued, discouraged, and almost
" exhausted, it is in vain that I endea-
" vour with straining eyes to gather a
" ray of hope in that vast horizon
" where the sun of German glory seems
" set for ever. The flashes of British

" victory itself throw but a trembling
" and a meteor light, too feeble to
" pierce the darkness that seems to
" brood over my country!

" Tremble not, Caroline," continued my father, " tremble not, for you " have yet to attend to more excruciating anticipations. I foresee that England, that brave and gallant nation, " will be deserted by every ally. The " strength, the spirit, and the character " of the House of Austria will be broken and subdued, and its mutilated " power removed from the banks of " the Scheldt and the Rhine, to the " distant shores of the Adriatic! The " German empire, already mulct and " amerced, appears, even now, to await " the consummation of its fate, in the " silence of despair;—while the King " of P——a, after another struggle " which I may be compelled reluctantly

" to conduct, will have his crown tram-
" pled under foot, or be allowed to
" have it maintained by a Jacobin
" army, and a jacobin, treacherous,
" profligate court!

" Russia, Denmark, and Sweden,
" also from an insane and deranged
" spirit of commercial avarice and fraud,
" will enter into evasive and disgrace-
" ful conditions with France.

" The rest of the continent, Spain,
" Portugal, Italy, Piedmont, the cour-
" ses of the lower Rhine into the ocean,
" the Seven United Provinces, the Low
" Countries, will all readily be absorb-
" ed. By treaty or by terror, by in-
" fluence or by force, they all will be-
" come members and departments of
" the French empire; their ships, their
" soldiers, their commerce, and their
" revenues, will all be at its disposal:

" and a power so enormous as was
" never yet concentrated by any league
" or confederation of independent so-
" vereigns and states, will be amassed
" and converged into one single arm!
" in the arm of the young Bonaparte!

" Flushed with victory, goaded by
" disappointments, and directed by
" rancour and ambition, this adventu-
" rer will direct, against the shores of
" England, the collected armies of all
" his conquered nations.

" He will———but my child, 'tis
" my ambition to be in the service of
" that glorious country; to oppose my
" experience to his audacity, and to
" assist in securing so brave a people
" from so unmerited and shameful a
" fate.

"Deprived of all hopes in my native
"land, I look to England as the theatre
"of future glory; and I am happy to
"tell you, my daughter, that a circum-
"stance has just come to my knowledge
"which affords me the truest felicity,
"and promises success to all my de-
"signs. An express has just reached
"me, that the Duke of Edinburgh has
"insisted upon the immediate marriage
"of his eldest son, the Marquis of Al-
"bion; that in compliance with a law
"which governs that illustrious family,
"a foreign protestant Princess has been
"selected for his wife; portraits of all
"such have been submitted to the
"judgment of the Marquis, and he, my
"Caroline, has had the grace and dis-
"crimination to make choice of you!"

It would appear, my Charlotte, that misfortunes operate variously on the human mind. Some hearts they soften

and fructify: others they render callous and steril.

My father had no sooner pronounced the dreadful determination of the Marquis, than rage and indignation took possession of my breast.

'What, Sir,' I exclaimed, 'do you 'think that your daughter can enter 'into a cold political engagement with 'a man who is a stranger to her 'heart?

'No, Sir, rather let me dwell in 'wretchedness, or else marry a man of 'a congenial nature; a man of integrity 'and honor, interested in my happi-'ness and welfare.'

"Cease! cease! perverse girl!" exclaimed my father, "a long habit of

" affectionate indulgence, has, I per-
" ceive, made you lose all idea of respect
" and obedience. You have lost every
" desire to be of service to your father
" and to your country. You care not
" how you afflict and agitate my mind.
" You feel for none but for yourself.
" You heed not for the prosperity of
" your family. You consider not that
" the Marquis is heir apparent to the
" most extensive power and estates.
" That by your marriage with him, you
" will revive the former lustre of your
" House; gratify the ambition of a fa-
" ther, and stand between him and a
" broken heart, and a premature grave!"

This address of my father's, broke my spirits, and gave me a look of patience and resignation, by which he was deceived. He took me to his bosom, and kissed my cheek. I flung my arm round his venerable neck, and for an

instant both enjoyed the sweetest testimony of filial and parental affection.

" You consent then, my child," resumed the Duke, " you consent to ac-
" cept the hand of the Marquis; leave
" my arms my love, and let me com-
" municate the glad tidings."

I rose from his bosom terrified and exhausted.

' No, Sir,' said I, in the extremity of grief, and gaining strength from despair, ' no, Sir, never shall I consent
' to a marriage, cold, forced, and
' political.'

" What! never! dare you say never!" reiterated the Duke, and seizing me at the same time by the arm, and accompanying the action with the most violent gesticulations, and imprecations: " what, dare you say never!"

'Yes, I repeat it,' said I, in frantic agony, 'I say never—never, shall I give 'my hand to any——but to——.

I know not whether I uttered the word Algernon, for my father's rage rose so high, that he struck me to the earth, where I remained in a swoon, till restored by the tender cares of a kind mother, and the various attendants whom my father sent to the assistance of your lost and unfortunate

CAROLINE.

LETTER XXV.

On recovering from the swoon into which I was thrown by the conduct and communications of a too ambitious father, I paid no manner of attention to the objects or to the persons around me.

I revolved in my mind, as if awaking from a dream, the dreadful scene I had passed through. The comparison which I made between what I was, and what I had been, but the evening before, appeared too horrible and extraordinary to be real. I raved aloud, struck my forehead, and in the bitterness of my heart cursed the law and the people, which were the origin of my distraction and despair. I even assumed a cou-

rage and intrepidity beyond the ordinary capacity of my mind, and my eyes quickened like those of the consumptive, which are always brightest the nearer a patient approaches to dissolution.

Whilst in this state, my father entered the room. I had conceived for him all at once the most invincible antipathy: I could not disguise it: it appeared in every act, and pervaded the whole tenor of my conduct. This appearance could not serve to mitigate the fierceness of his disposition. He, however, suppressed his rage; and assuming his usual dignity and serenity of manner, he thus calmly addressed me.

"Caroline, to honor God, and to do
"good to mankind, has hitherto been
"your greatest felicity. There is not

" a person in all this country, who does
" not talk of you with the warmest
" gratitude; not one who does not, with
" tears of joy, relate some instance of
" your kindness or beneficence. Not
" one—save your father!

" Alas! for him you have neither
" respect nor sentiment; candour, care,
" gracious smile, or filial solicitude.
" And yet I love thee, Caroline, and I
" would, were fortune more propitious,
" make thee happy. I would make
" thee happy, my child."

He paused. I trembled, blushed and approached towards him. He took me by the hand, I fell at his feet, my resentment towards him subsided, and my voice died on my lips.

" My God!" he cried, " what do
" I behold! Tell me, O my child! do

" you consent to marry the Marquis of
" Albion, or is it a dream that deludes
" my senses? You appear again my
" daughter! Your eyes fill with grate-
" ful tears. You make me the happi-
" est of fathers. I shall make you the
" most exalted and happiest of daugh-
" ters."

A deep convulsive sigh, silenced and undeceived my father.

" Caroline," said he, " it is in vain
" to reject the hand of the Marquis:
" I must be obeyed: rise from the
" ground and hearken to my last re-
" solve!"

Pale, agonized, and heart-wrung, I rose, but could not stand. He moved towards me, and sustained my head on his bosom. I seized his hand and bath-

ed it with my tears. He bore me to a sopha, and placed himself by my side.

" Caroline," said he, with inexpressible tenderness, " amid the ruin of " my ambition, there was but one tie " left to hold me to the world; and that " was you. I long anticipated your " elevation by marriage. For this, I " struggled against diappointments, and " to support with a resignation becoming a soldier, the sorrows which " rived my heart after my calamities " in France. I loved you, too, my " daughter, and to gratify that love, as " well as my own ambition, I sought " to bestow your hand upon the man I " esteem the most of any upon earth. " I have now obtained his, and his parents' concurrence. Do, my Caro- " line, let the eager pleading of your " father win your consent! Do, my " child, yield to my earnest entreaty,

" consent that the nuptial tie shall join
" your hands, and I shall answer that
" love shall join your hearts. Prepa-
" rations shall be quickly made for your
" marriage by proxy, and the festival
" shall be celebrated with all the dig-
" nity becoming your birth."

This dreadful denunciation again restored me to an artificial heat; it roused my exhausted spirits, and made me incapable of being intimidated by threats or of being soothed by caresses. My father perceived the inflexible character of my mind. He shook with rage and indignation, but perceiving my mother enter the room, he rose to retire—first directing her, in a tone determined and imperious, to see that I obeyed him before twenty-four hours should elapse.

My mother placed herself directly by me. I viewed her for some time si-

lently, and she appeared in my eyes an angel. Her features shone with all her natural goodness and innocence, though strongly clouded with an air of melancholy and pensiveness.

Accustomed as I had been lately to the intemperate violence of my father, the beauty of my mother's beneficence flushed upon me irresistibly. I could bear my feelings no longer. I fell on her neck, and kissed her. She wept, and at the same time wiped the tears from my streaming eyes. Innocent tears! they soothed the mind, and contributed to knit our hearts still more firmly together.

An explanation of the tenderest kind ensued. At length my mother observed——

"Caroline, my love, it is in vain to
"resist your father. Since his defeat
"in France, his mind has entirely
"changed, and he seems capable of
"feeling no sentiment, of uttering no
"thought, but those which relate to
"the recovery of his glory, or the re-
"putation which he fears he has lost.
"Instead of being diminished, his am-
"bition is increased. His very lan-
"guage and looks partake of this ter-
"rible complexion of mind; and one
"might know either from his diction
"or his countenance, that the former
"charity of his heart now yields to
"ambitious views, to intolerance, and
"to persecution.

"'Tis in vain to oppose him! But
"if you do oppose him, mark my words,
"my child, you will expose your mo-
"ther to all his fury for suffering your
"intimacy with Algernon, and you will

" consign your Algernon to those regi-
" ons of sorrow; to those hideous dun-
" geons where the victims of your fa-
" ther's displeasure already linger;
" where they clank their heavy chains
" in darkness, and where loathsome
" vermin are their only companions,
" and the constant witnesses of their
" groans and tears.

" Relax then I beseech you your re-
" solution! hazard not your mother's
" peace—your lover's head! Consent
" to marry the Marquis; do, my Caro-
" line, consent. Appear in the ami-
" able colours of humanity—the wise
" will applaud your wisdom, the just
" will admire your justice, and the
" merciful will venerate your philan-
" thropy. You will appear in the most
" dignified character; you will excite
" all the love and admiration you de-
" serve. You will be held up to view

" as a perfect pattern for imitation, and
" you will ever bear testimony to this
" important truth, that filial affection
" or obedience, is the most faithful
" beacon for guiding a daughter through
" the storms and tempests of life, to
" the desired haven of peace, happi-
" ness, and prosperity."

My father returned as my mother concluded this beautiful appeal to the reason and to the judgment. He, from what motives I know not, congratulated my mother on her success. I was too much moved and affected to undeceive him. My silence, compromised my honor, and I was hurried into the appearance, by a virtuous impulse, of giving a flagitious consent to an union, which my soul abhorred! I can no more. Pity your

CAROLINE.

LETTER XXVI.

Tortured and exhausted with hopeless and mortifying reflections, I arose the following morning from a weary bed;—dressed, and opened the window which looked into a garden on the east side of the palace.

The pure air wafting the fragrant odours of the herbs and flowers, in some small degree dispelled the gloomy clouds that enveloped my maddened and bewildered brain; I felt my body recover new strength, and my heart animated by reviving hopes. And whilst my eyes wandered over the garden, I perceived Algernon busily engaged in conversation with the gardener who appeared to explain to him

the nature of his rural labours, and to shew, by his diction and manner, how little he envied people the enjoyments of a more exalted life. From the pure and simple pleasure which illuminated the smiles of Algernon, I could well comprehend him a stranger to all that had passed, and was passing in my heart. Indeed, I learnt from Melina, that he had been sent to Berlin by my father, and I could perceive by the elegant disorder of his travelling dress, that he had but just returned to court. I descended to the garden, and with a slow and frozen step, and a heart palpitating advanced towards him.

The alteration of my manner had an instantaneous effect upon Algernon. Ever and anon his piercing eye glanced upon me. The change he beheld seemed to fill him with terror and astonishment. My form worn thin, and my

countenance overspread with the whiteness of a lily's hue; for hungry corroding sorrow had banquetted on the roses that used to bloom upon my cheek; my swoln eye surcharged with drops of sorrow, that seemed prepared to burst forth the half-stifled sob, and the quick heaves of my bosom, all gave evidence of a mind within woe-fraught and wounded by calamity;—while the pent up turbulence of my grief sought to vent itself in exclamations, and, with a wish to conceal it from observation, contended for the mastery.

I endeavoured all I could to recover that outward composure, which the approach to Algernon, and the quick sense of what I was to lose, had removed me from; teaching my countenance to wear the semblance of a calm serenity I was far from feeling, and to veil the various and conflicting emotions

that warred within my mind. Like the stormy ocean's waves dashing to and fro, at one time raging with fury on to its greatest height in mountainous billows reaching to the clouds, anon plunging down into a vast abyss, and again rising to their steepy ascent; so my spirits rose and fell, as wrought on by the silent sorrow that preyed upon them. I strove to still this agitation of my grief-charged soul, and in some measure at length succeeded. I looked the picture of depressive melancholy, calm and patiently resigned to meet its fate; but still my grief, too mighty to be conquered, smothered within me, as a fire ill quenched, ever and ever bursting forth into rising flame. No more the lustre of my eye sparkled. No more their timid glances turned on Algernon, to cheer, as they were wont, his adoring heart; but pointed them downward in tearful dignity, or momentarily raised

to cast a mournful look, and then again turned to their former station with a deep fetched sigh!

Algernon could not but note with agony and apprehension, the paleness and dejection my countenance expressed. He should have thought me in ill health, had not my assurances to the contrary satisfied him that I was not indisposed. Yet certain, ill I was, and that he knew, though not in body; yet, if it lay not in the frame, he was convinced by my looks, that spoke the changeful emotions of my soul, it must be in my heart or in my mind.

The transient pleasure I had experienced when first I approached him after his absence, did not exist any length of time; a something like a foul and ugly fiend recollection conjured up in my brain, to rip ope my sorrows

afresh, which the healing hand of a rising hope had in some sort a little tempered; while its pestiferous breath withered, like the nipping northern blast, all the fair flowers of visionary happiness, which the sanguine youth had presented to me, and, in the swiftness of a thought, destroyed the pleasure I had felt, turned it into bitterness, and rent asunder the pleasing charm that kept my mind in confinement: short-lived as is the nimble winged epemeron, that lavishes away its few hours of existence in sporting over the waters which gave it to the light; in the grey of evening it is brought forth, and yet a little space, ere the night has performed the half of its course, the period of its life is finished. Even so my joy shone forth—and then died! gentle, not of any permanent duration; sweet, not stable; the delirium that pleasure unexpected wraps the senses in.

I again, however, felt the influence of Algernon's presence, and for a moment forgot the griefs that laboured within me; but soon, alas! but soon resumed their position. The measure of my woes seemed full and running over. I felt as if the sweet comforter of grief-wounded minds, angel-formed hope, had spread its airy pinions, and left me a forlorn wretch, dead to all the world, without any prospect whispering consolation to my distracted brain; distracted with many troubles, and seeing no conclusion to my woes, save in death's cold arms. No friendly ray of far-distant happiness broke upon my gloomy reflections; all, all, was dreary and desolate. My father inexorably determined. My mother doomed to pass her life in sorrow, were it known that she countenanced my attachment for Algernon: and I, even I, condemned to exile myself from home, or to

consent to a political marriage with the Marquis.

There was no being to whom I could look for protection. I thought of Prince L——s; but honor, rigid honor forbade the claim, and bade me keep as immaculate my reputation as was my virtue; nor let envious detraction, that seeks by forged tales of vile calumny, told behind the back of unsuspecting innocence, to sully its fair fame, that it might plant its malicious gratifications on another's ruin, and smile over the destruction! shrinking to very nothing when the intended victim turns its face to meet their licentious reproaches and meddling censure. A slanderous tongue ever strikes the purest virtue as equal in the monarch as the peasant; employs its miriads of viperous tongues to contaminate the spotless fame, and load with vile op-

probrious epithets the mother of my Charlotte, setting her up as a mark for the vicious to aim their scandal at, and ———!

O Charlotte! into what digression have I fallen! Cruel J——y! why do you thus traverse my thought and pervert my reason? Having blasted my happiness, and stained the honor of my House, why will you obtrude on my oblivion? why will you inspire me with an abhorrence, with a terror, that renders me incapable of writing to a daughter, or of communing with myself? 'Tis in vain, my child! this lady's image so perturbs my mind, that I must now conclude with being your

CAROLINE.

LETTER XXVII.

WHILE agitated with the contending emotions which I vainly endeavoured to describe in my last letter to you, my sweet Charlotte, Algernon had conducted me to a seat, and having placed himself beside me, with his eyes intently fixed on mine, he exclaimed:

"Caroline! Oh, my Caroline! wilt
"thou not speak to me?—Wilt thou
"not let me share the griefs thy looks
"tell me thou canst but ill conceal?—
"Wherefore is thine eye pensive—
"downcast? Oh! tell me, I conjure
"thee, what has chanced to check the
"joy thus our meeting should have
"raised? speak! oh, speak! Where-

" fore dost thou weep my Caroline ?" he continued, observing my cheeks studded with big drops.—" Those " tears proceed not from joy! No, " they come from some hidden sorrow " which I fain would soothe or partici- " pate.—Give me to know the cause, " that I may pour the healing balm of " gentle pity and commiseration into " thy soft bosom, lull thy cares to rest, " and speak to thee of future happy, " happy, days of mutual transport; till " thy griefs be forgotten, and thy soul " yield to thy Algernon and to love."

' Love, Algernon! ah me!' cried I, ' would I had never known its power- ' ful influence!—I then should not ' have to endure the conflicting emo- ' tions, that agitate my soul, and destroy ' all my felicities. If to love be count-

ed sweet, wherefore, ah! wherefore is
' your Caroline thus miserable?'

" And has love, my Caroline, made
" thee so?" interrupted he, with viva-
city.—" When first thy lips confessed
" thy heart was mine, I fondly thought
" you seemed not miserable then, but
" filled rather with heavenly joy and
" transport, restrained only by timid
" soul-enchanting modesty, which yet
" could not prevent their appearing in
" thy features. Thy lovely counte-
" nance breathed an air of bewitching
" ravishment, and thy whole mien
" spoke the most extatic tenderness.
" when, sunk into my arms, thou sup-
" portedst thy beauteous head against
" my breast, and sufferedst me to clasp
" thy winning form to the heart that
" beat only for thee. With eyes down-
" cast, and blooming cheeks blushing
" like the lovely rose, you listened

" to the soft whispers of love; and,
" with a tongue of seraphic music, ex-
" changed, in accents, low and uncon-
" nected, with me, vows of unshaken
" and inviolable fidelity: while I hung
" enamoured over thee; beheld thy
" fascinating features glow with inef-
" fable sweetness; saw thy enchanting
" bosom heave with transport undis-
" sembled as you murmured out pro-
" testations of eternal love, which was
" answered in an incoherent strain of
" rapturous fondness. Then, oh then!
" what transport! what delight crowd-
" ed upon me! Surely such wondrous
" joy never was raised in the heart of
" man as that I then felt! Let the re-
" collection of that blessed hour tune
" thy heart once more to love, and ba-
" nish sorrow from that gentle bo-
" som!"

'Never, Algernon! oh, never can
'that be,' exclaimed I, 'unless the
'cause, the fatal cause, be first remov-
'ed! Sorrow and Caroline cannot part
'so easily as you imagine. Since I last
'saw you, hope has been a stranger to
'this sad heart.—Even now, a prey to
'grief, words vainly struggle for utter-
'ance.—Algernon! I cannot speak my
'thought.—Farewell! a long farewell
'to happiness! It is torn for ever
'from me; and my heart in losing you,
'has lost its all.—Now, Algernon, col-
'lect all thy fortitude to sustain this
'shock: Summon thy noble spirit to
'aid thee at the trying moment, lest
'that thou sink beneath it, and become
'unable to support our eternal sepa-
'ration! ! !'

"Separation! eternal separation!
"what means my Caroline?" exclaim-

ed the frantic Algernon. " I will never
" part from thee till this body lies
" breathless upon the earth's cold sur-
" face; for, art thou not my life, my
" love, my all? and shall I quit thee?
" —no, never; my existence is linked
" with thine, and thine with mine.
" Yet you say we must part!"

' Yes, Algernon! I repeat it,' said I, ' we must for ever part. Separate, ' Heaven knows, never more to meet! ' —Now hold, my heart, or beat no ' more! Yet one other trial! but ah! ' the tears fall down my cheek!—I fear ' it is a bitter trial!—Algernon it will ' shake thy fortitude; and thou wilt ' call down bitter imprecations upon ' her who, in a detested hour, ruined ' all thy happiness! wilt thou not, when ' thou knowest the cause that has lost ' me one I too much loved?—When

' thou hearest that I am already—that
' I did———!'

" What didst thou do ?" asked Algernon, gazing eagerly upon me, as I sat striving to speak but unable, the tears stopping my utterance, and the sounds dying away upon my lips.—
" Ha, great Heaven !" continued he,
" a dire foreboding of hidden mischief
" bursts upon my mind. If it be true;
" —Blessed powers of just providence,
" defend and support me ! But perish
" such a thought to wrong the truth
" and purity of my Caroline !—Yet I
" must be satisfied—Tell me, Caroline;
" —let me know the worst at once, lest
" that, having it with-held, my doubts
" may increase and draw me into mad-
" ness.—In pity, rack not my brains
" with wild thoughts of another happier
" lover wresting thy affections from me.
" Speak ! but speak, dispel my doubts.

" tell me that they are unfounded, or
" —that Prince L——s is a villain !"

Oppressed as I then was with a thousand terrors, this unexpected stroke made me unable to make a reply. He rose from his seat with an air frantic and wild.—I clung in speechless agony to his arm. I trembled in silence. His nerves, too, shook, his frantic mien forsook him, and he fell extended upon the earth.—I dropt on my knees.

' Oh Algernon ! forgive me !' cried I, —' do hearken to your Caroline ; mi-
' serable as we are, we are not so miser-
' able as you conceive. Prince L——s
' is your dearest friend !—A B——h
' peer, the Marquis of Albion,'—continued I, hanging over him,—' is the
' only enemy you possess. To him it
' is, that I am by violence to be allied !

'To him it is that my father immolates 'his child! To him it is, that you are 'to attribute————.'

"Stop, Caroline," said the reviving Algernon,—"Stop! why, alas! conti- "nue a confession as injurious to me "as unavailing to yourself! Dearest "Caroline forgive the outrage that es- "caped my lips! forgive the reproach- ful glance that escaped my eyes! for- give————"

'Oh, Algernon! fly! fly!' repeated I in agony: 'here are persons come in 'my pursuit. But mark me! should 'my father's severity affect my life be- 'fore the prosecution of this mar- 'riage, for my sake, for the sake of 'your Caroline, be to my father a ser- 'vant—to my mother a friend!'

I fell upon his shoulder and wept bitterly. He clasped me to his breast. We were conducted to breakfast by Melina and the Prince, who found us in this agonizing state, and who in some measure restored us by flattering hopes to ourselves.

CAROLINE.

END OF VOL. I.

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